AMERICAN CRISIS BIOGRAPHIES

Edited by

Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, Ph. D.

The American Crisis Biographies

Edited by Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, Ph.D. With the counsel and advice of Professor John B. McMaster, of the University of Pennsylvania.

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Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

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AMERICAN CRISIS BIOGRAPHIES

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

by

LINDSAY SWIFT
Author of "Benjamin Franklin," etc.

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To

Edwin Munroe Bacon

My Friend Through All Fortunes
This Book
is
Affectionately Dedicated

PREFACE

THIS, like prefaces in general, is mostly an itemized acknowledgment of indebtedness. My first and pleasant duty is to state that this book is written conjointly with my friend, Henry Burrowes Lathrop, Associate Professor of English in the University of Wisconsin. The original agreement with the publishers does not, to my regret, allow me to link his name with mine on the title page. Two years ago, when the work was due and the general editor was courteously pressing me for the manuscript, I failed suddenly in health. Professor Lathrop then kindly offered to share a burden which I could not have borne alone. That the book at last appears at all is due to his generous aid and his ability to compass a task by no means easy. Each has so freely criticized the other that the entire work is really an expression of two minds working in reasonable harmony; but it is fair to my associate for me to say that the last part is practically of his writing, while the first eight chapters and the final chapter are mine. Such is my gratitude to Professor Lathrop, that I sincerely hope we may share the praise, if any is given, and that all shortcomings will be laid at my door.

Another deep obligation is to the monumental life of Garrison written by two of his sons. The young-

est and surviving son, Francis Jackson Garrison, besides giving me many helpful suggestions, has generously encouraged me to make the freest use of this important contribution to American biography. It is possible that I have availed myself too largely of this permission. If the present book shall tempt others and especially a younger generation to read the four volumes of this filial tribute to a noble, interesting and commanding character, it will not have been a vain task for Mr. Lathrop and myself to have written it.

The manuscript has, to my great satisfaction and peace of mind, passed under the critical inspection of two friends, Mr. Edwin M. Bacon and Miss Mary H. Rollins, who have my deep thanks.

It would be ungracious to omit a word of gratitude for the help, impersonal to be sure but no less real, received from the collections of the Boston Public Library and especially from the anti-slavery archives therein deposited mainly by the Garrison family.

I cannot pretend that I have burrowed deep in "original sources." Exhaustive research in hitherto untouched documents and manuscripts was not necessary to the formation of a fairly clear estimate. There are singularly few historical tangles in the annals of Anti-slavery and Abolitionism, and printed books, many of them, however, now forgotten, have served our purpose.

The son of a Free-Soiler and early Republican, I entered upon the task with a feeling that Garrison's career might fail, in many respects, to satisfy one having such an inheritance. But as the work grew

apace, most, though not all, of the doubts fell away and I came to see that the character of the man and the part he played in the vast drama of the mid-nineteenth century in this country, had triumphed over the misgivings which had at first beset me. I had insensibly reverted to the convictions of my paternal grandparents, uncompromising Abolitionists and Methodist "Come-outers," and I was able to see with their eyes as well as with my own that Garrison and such as they who in a large measure followed him, were guided by eternal verities and not by policy. Whether they were right or wrong is not the question. I have come by slow processes to satisfy my own reasoning that they were sincere, and that they were necessary instruments in a great undertaking. Toward this conclusion my partner in the task happily needed no persuasion.

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CHRONOLOGY

1805—December 10th, born in Newburyport, Mass., of Abijah and Frances Maria (Lloyd) Garrison.

1814—Apprenticed to Gamaliel W. Oliver, shoemaker, in Lynn, Mass.

1815—Removes, by sea, with his mother, to Baltimore.

1816—Returns to Newburyport.

1818—Apprenticed to Moses Short, cabinet-maker, Haverhill, Mass. Runs away, is recovered, and finally discharged, returning to Newburyport. Apprenticed to Ephraim W. Allen, editor of the Newburyport *Herald.*

1822—Begins to write, anonymously, for the *Herald.*

1823—September 3d, death of his mother.

1825—End of his apprenticeship.

1826—Editor and publisher of the *Free Press,* Newburyport. Meets John Greenleaf Whittier. To Boston in search of employment.

1827—Compositor in Boston.

1828—Editor of the *National Philanthropist.* First meeting in Boston with Benjamin Lundy, anti-slavery advocate. Begins editing the *Journal of the Times* at Bennington, Vt., in support of John Quincy Adams.

1829—Returns to Boston ; rooms with Whittier. Delivers his first public address against slavery at the Park Street church. Goes to Baltimore as co-editor of Lundy's paper. First proclaims that slaves are entitled to "immediate and complete emancipation."

1830—Tried for libel against Francis Todd and committed to Baltimore jail. Released, returns to Boston. Issues prospectus for *Public Liberator and Journal of the Times* to be issued in Washington. Delivers anti-slavery addresses.

1831—January 1st, first issue of the *Liberator*.

1832—The New England Anti-Slavery Society formed, the first organization in the Garrison movement. Publishes "Thoughts on African Colonization."

1833—Meets his future wife, Helen Eliza Benson, in Providence, R. I. Visits England. Indicted for libel in connection with Prudence Crandall case. Drafts Declaration of Sentiments at formation of American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia.

1834—September 4th, married. George Thompson arrives from England.

1835—Burned in effigy at Charleston, S. C. Gallows erected before his house in Boston. Victim of the "respectable" mob in Boston; committed to Leverett street jail over night. Dissolves partnership with Knapp on the *Liberator*.

1836—Visits John Quincy Adams. Attacked by "Clerical Appeal."

1838—Present at the mobbing and destruction of Pennsylvania Hall, Philadelphia. Helps organize Non-Resistance Society in Boston.

1840—Schism in American Anti-Slavery Society over membership of women and duty of political action. Goes to England to attend World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, but refuses to take part in the convention because women delegates are excluded. Attends Chardon Street Convention, Boston.

1841—Tour in White Mountains with N. P. Rogers.

1842—First intimation of disunion policy.

1843—Declares the pro-slavery compact of the Constitution "a covenant with Death and an agreement with Hell."

1844—American Anti-Slavery Society adopts his policy of "No Union with Slaveholders."

1845—Delegate to Anti-Texas convention in Faneuil Hall, Boston.

1846—Goes to England on invitation of the Glasgow Emancipation Society. Helps form Anti-Slavery League in London.

1847—Makes his first Western tour. Is attacked with fever in Cleveland, O.

1848—Calls Anti-Sabbath Convention in Boston.

1849—Presents address to Father Mathew in Boston.

1850—Witnesses mobbing, by Rynders's gang, of American Anti-Slavery Society anniversary meeting in New York. Present at reception to and mobbing of George Thompson in Faneuil Hall.

1853—Mobbed at Bible Convention, Hartford, Conn. Second Western tour. Visits Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe at Andover, Mass.

1854—Burns the Constitution in public at Framingham, Mass., July 4th.

1857—Meets John Brown at Theodore Parker's house. At Worcester (Mass.) disunion convention. Joins call for Cleveland (Ohio) disunion convention.

1863—Celebrates Emancipation Proclamation, in Boston, January 1st. At celebration in Philadelphia of thirtieth anniversary of American Anti-Slavery Society.

1864—Has an interview with President Lincoln.

1865—Celebrates adoption of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. With George Thompson at the raising of the flag over Fort Sumter. Receives ovation from freedmen. Resigns presidency of the American Anti-Slavery Society, May 10th. Issues the last number of the *Liberator*, December 29th.

1867—Sails for London with George Thompson. Meets John Bright. Breakfast in his honor in London. Speeches by John Bright, the Duke of Argyll, Earl Russell, John Stuart Mill and George Thompson. Presented with the freedom of the city of Edinburgh. Attends International Anti-Slavery Conference in Paris as delegate from American Freedmen's Union. Visits Switzerland.

1868—Presented with a national testimonial of thirty-one thousand dollars.

1875—Celebrates his seventieth birthday by setting type in the Newburyport *Herald* office.

1876—Death of Mrs. Garrison, January 25th.

1877—Goes to England on his fifth and final visit. Last meeting with Thompson.

1878—Sets type in Newburyport *Herald* office on sixtieth anniversary of his apprenticeship, October 13th. Dinner in his honor given by the New England Franklin Club (of master printers), Boston, October 14th.

1879—Opposes the Chinese exclusion policy. Dies in New York, May 24th. Buried at Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston.

1885–89—*Story of His Life, Told by His Children*, issued in four volumes.

1886—Olin L. Warner's bronze statue of Garrison erected on Commonwealth Avenue, Boston.

1905—Celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, in Boston and elsewhere.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

CHAPTER I

THE ANTECEDENT CONDITION

THE writer who essays the life of William Lloyd Garrison and somewhat of its relations to and its effect upon the national life, is not obliged to trace the black and melancholy current of slavery from its beginnings on this continent down to the moment when he set forth to stem it. Furthermore, except in a brief and perhaps cursory way, it is not desirable to record the names of those who before his time were roused to utterance on this momentous subject; for, to the end of his career, in a strange and impressive manner he stood aloof from the influences, political and social, which usually merge the efforts even of men of marked ability and force into the general channels of united purpose. Were it not for Emerson and John Brown, he might almost be called the one successful American individualist of his day and generation. To a much greater degree than even Lincoln did he force issues, and combat apparently irresistible opposition. It was not his policy to cherish hopes and bide his time. He slept with his armor on, and was ready

to do battle without strategy or negotiation. This program was absolutely devoid of qualification or allowance for circumstances of time or inherited conditions. "Immediate emancipation" was early blazoned on his standards; his close followers were relatively few, and with some astonishing exceptions, of slight importance in the world's eyes. Yet his cause prospered, though surely not in a way that he could have foreseen, else had he, a non-resistant by profession, forsaken a path leading in thirty years to a strife which threatened the destruction of one of the dearest hopes of humanity—the existence of nearly twoscore sovereignties united under a common democratic government. He helped to precipitate controversies demanding for their settlement a force and an authority which he had never been willing to recognize. Strangest of all, in his desperate policy, he found his strongest allies in his bitterest enemies. His theory of secession was loftier than that of the South, but it was no less disobedient to a man-contrived central government.

Furthermore, though he came to repudiate the established forms and concrete practices of religion, his career had been an impossibility without the fervor and single-heartedness derived from an absorption of the Word of God as his simple education and his essentially Protestant and individual faith led him to interpret it. His speech and writings are full of the far-seeing and fervent zeal of the Old Testament prophets—he delighted in phrases which would have been cant in the mouth of another. If Jeremiah and Isaiah were inspired, so without pro-

faneness may we say that Garrison was inspired; for he, like them, was free from fanaticism, however harsh his comminations of the weak, irresolute, and indifferent. And during all his life he was, in the main elements of character, completely sane—sane as few men have been who possessed genius in the same measure as he. Uncomfortable streaks of oddity may be found, and must be spoken of when necessary, but as a whole he was well-rounded and self-restrained—a normal man.

To rehearse without bitterness, yet fearlessly, the story of this life, in its wider aspects, is not the easiest of tasks, for Garrison exasperated a nation, already stung to a sense of its shortcomings, as no man in recent times has had the power or the opportunity to do. To-day, as through his whole career, there is still open disapproval of or silent dissent from his extremes. Descendants of those whom he opposed in religion and reform seem to have inherited distrust or dislike. Probably the South is fairest of all to him, for he was only a part of the inevitable catastrophe which overwhelmed but did not crush her. Near home the memories are personal and often bitter. Fortunately there are no vexing controversies, except over negligible details, in the anti-slavery story as a whole. The view taken of it depends upon the interpretation of established facts and not upon the disentanglement of complicated annals. Much may advisedly be omitted and still enough will be left on which to base a personal opinion. It will be many years yet before the mass of events shall have crystallized

into a clear product, with many facets perhaps, yet uniform and coherent to a later historic observation.

"Who is this Mr. Garrison? Did not Lay and Sandiford, Woolman and Benezet, Jay and Franklin, advocate the slavery cause before William Lloyd Garrison was heard of?" Thus, in 1852, asks Richard D. Webb, one of the most intrepid of the Irish Abolitionists, in order to answer his own questioning according to the spirit of his times. It is now nearly sixty years later, but these questions still arise and must be answered, however briefly, if the great problem which vexed the country somewhat in its earliest days, harassed its peace of mind mightily for thirty years, and shook its foundations for four years, is to be fairly considered, and its foremost agitator honestly interpreted. So evident a fact as the existence of earlier Abolitionists need not impair or disturb the sure reputation of Garrison. To approach, now, this matter of priority, it may be well to get a little further taste of Mr. Webb's opinion, written with the stress and feeling characteristic of its period. It summarizes the situation toward which Garrison had then striven persistently for more than twenty years. "Before he commenced his career, the whole nation was sunk in apathy respecting it [the slavery question]. He was compelled then, *nolens volens*, to take it up, and now they cannot lay it down (although it burns their fingers dreadfully) until it has been settled in one way or another. It is the question upon which the fate of the parties, the election of Presidents, and

the existence of the republic depend. It mixes itself up with every public question, and overshadows them all. Slavery knows she is engaged in a struggle for existence, and the battle is fought with all the fury of desperation. This agitation dashes sects and parties to pieces. It troubles synods, conferences, yearly meetings, political conventions. It cries to the nation, 'Sleep no more!' All whose property, policy, pelf, and sectarian tranquillity are invaded, lay the blame at Mr. Garrison's door. No wonder they are 'grieved,' 'irritated,' and 'indignant' with him."

Let it be understood at the outset that whatever is said of the slavery question of three generations ago deals with a tale that is told, and not with a discussion still vexing intellect and conscience on each side of the great imaginary line which once divided North and South, but which is well-nigh forgotten, even to the name.

Any discussion as to whether Garrison was the nursing father of an anti-slavery movement in this country must be largely academic. It is possible and even necessary to show that before his day there were others who felt as strongly perhaps as he that slavery was not only an unwelcome curse, but also a burden and a menace. With few exceptions, they who abominated the institution took the humanitarian view, or the religious view, or almost any position less uncompromising, less violent in its demand than the inviolate, crystal clear idealism of William Lloyd Garrison. He certainly more than any man gave impetus, and then motion to a

decidedly inert though actually existent mass of public opinion. But he did not discover slavery, and must take his high place in the honorable succession of those who also bore the torch and passed it on. "The country is awake to the dangers of slavery," wrote Jeremiah Evarts, father of the late William M. Evarts, in 1820; and three years later Royal Washburn sent forth the cry from Andover Seminary: "Now thousands call the men of Africa brethren; thousands are willing to devote their money and their efforts to redeem them from their long captivity."

Even before Woolman and Benezet and Franklin, there were others who deplored the sin of slavery, its consequent immoralities and its injustices. But after all is said, in an age of indentured servitude the feeling against a still worse social status could hardly be called acute. There was no cloud of witnesses to the truth—only those intelligent and sensitized few who are not bound in any age to its conventions or its self-exculpations.

Notwithstanding the occasional protest of earlier days, it is essential, in any estimate of slavery as it once existed, both North and South, to remember that domestic service, mostly indoors, was not, even though unrequited, the same in kind as drudgery in plantations and rice-fields under conditions hard at the best,—intolerable, indeed, but for the physiological capacity of the plantation negro to endure life in almost tropical swamps, and for his temperamental inertness, from which even cruelty could not extort more than a certain average mini-

mum of performance. All this being so, it is interesting to note that while much has been said and written of the careless, easy-going, and, at times, fatuously happy slave-life in the South, with its songs, dances, merrymakings, and religious ecstasies, there is no such tradition of gaiety among those in as real if not as onerous bondage in the North. Like master, like man, perhaps the case was—for hilarity was not conspicuous in the northern American Colonies, and such undoubted good humor as Franklin, for instance, possessed, was seemingly rare. If down South the whip was cracked, the laugh also went round, especially at Christmas and other seasons of merrymaking, while farther North, although there may have been little or practically no physical brutality, there was certainly almost no joyousness—certainly no Christmas ; for a long time that festive season had no admitted existence in some of the Colonies.

It must be taken for granted that the customs of the world were, in a large measure, the customs of the early colonists, who were by no means cut off from the influence of European civilization. There was toleration of slavery everywhere. Even the greatest English Queen had a hand in the slave-trade, although it is believed that she did not wholly approve her own conduct. It was possible for Sir John Hawkins to have prayers of unusual fervor on the upper deck, while the hold was full of stifling black humanity packed in as no cattle would be packed to-day—in fact, slaves were cattle to the Christian of those times. Even the wonderful Sir

Francis Drake, generally as humane as he was brave, had his share in the horrible traffic. Only a few years after this period, the colonists began to come into English America, bringing old-world tradition and inheritance. Yet in every age there have been a few who have had quicker consciences, greater discernment than the many—the morally superior outstripping, like the intellectually superior, their own generation. As early as 1641 the General Court of Assistants of the Massachusetts Bay enacted in the "Body of Liberties" that slavery should not exist in the colony, except in the case of captives of war. Notwithstanding this stand of authority, some slaves were held in the Puritan colony. Roger Williams was the first American to inveigh against the enslavement of man, in this instance of captive Indians. Some years later John Eliot, "Apostle to the Indians," showed humanitarian views, mingled with an outweighing concern for souls removed by enslavement from "all means of grace."

"The Selling of Joseph" was the expression of the humane and honorable Chief-Justice Samuel Sewall. Penitent for his attitude in the witch trials, he made occasion, as the eighteenth century was opening, to state his belief that the slave-trade and the holding of human beings as property were evils, and that "no one ought to deprive others of [liberty], but upon most extreme consideration." Chief-justices of Massachusetts, however, are not often radical in their actions or their tendencies, and one must regard his tract as only a little more

humanitarian than the rather low level of objection to slavery made at that time on the ground that slaves were not an economical device.

It would be hard to find a clearer or an earlier instance of the general state of mind, as to the moral side of the matter, than is to be seen in the *Boston News Letter*, for June 10, 1706. According to the previous year's bill of mortality in that good town, there was record of the death of forty-four negroes, "which being computed one with another at £30 per Head, amounts to the Sum of One Thousand three hundred and twenty Pounds, of which we would make the Remark; That the Importing of Negroes into this or the Neighboring Provinces is not so beneficial either to the Crown or Country, as White Servants would be." The writer goes on to show that negroes cannot use firearms, that they are generally eye-servants and great thieves, and that they do not people the country; for this reason he argues that many husbandmen, unable to invest forty or fifty pounds for a negro, might by an increased importation of whites, be furnished with servants for "eight, nine or ten pounds per Head." "If the White Servant die, the Loss exceeds not £10, but if a Negro dies, 'tis a very great loss." Furthermore, in case of enemies, a negro cannot be sent against them, but "if he [the husbandman] has a White Servant, 'twill answer the end," and perhaps "save his Son at home." His conclusion is that in one year "the Town of Boston has lost £1,320 in 44 negroes, which is also a loss to the Country in general; for a less Loss of a £1,000 the country

may have 500 men in five years' time for the 44 Negroes dead in one year." It was, as is plain, a purely economic question. Negroes, especially dead negroes, did not pay. One hundred and fifty years later it required a long and costly war to demonstrate that free labor was more profitable than slave labor, but by that time elements other than the purely economic fully entered into the settlement. A more cold-blooded consideration of any topic than this deliberate taking up of the relative commercial value of two sorts of human flesh it would not be easy to find. The judicial Sewall and the gentle-souled Woolman surely had stony ground on which to make an early planting of humane ideas —not the less stony because theirs was an age of undoubted formal piety. In the *News Letter* argument we find not a suggestion of an early sentiment foretelling the advent in the fulness of time of the fierce evangelism of Garrison.

Sixty years later Nathaniel Appleton had the hardihood to condemn *in toto* slavery and the importation of slaves, but like Sewall he made no profession of regarding negroes as on terms of equality with whites.

Each generation of Puritan civilization seems to have kept alive a belief that human bondage was an evil, but no violent proposal was made to do away with it. The Society of Friends have a livelier record of opposition, though the ground of this opposition in each sect was religious and based on the teachings of both Testaments. John Hepburn of New Jersey as early as 1714 made his protest

against the "miserable effects" produced by the slavery of negroes. Even before this, in 1688, the Germantown Mennonites, affiliated with the Quakers, had issued the "first distinctly anti-slavery document in America," [1] and five years later George Keith opposed the surrender of fugitive slaves. After Hepburn came William Burling, Elihu Coleman, Ralph Sandiford and Benjamin Lay—all before 1750. The two latter men were associates of Franklin while he was laying the foundation of his substantial fortune in the printing office from which their efforts were put forth. The assaults of Lay and Hepburn on Christian apologists for slavery vie with Garrison's choicest epithets against the clergy. In contrast with these rather turbulent pamphleteers appear the names of the Huguenot Anthony Benezet and John Woolman, the latter a precursor on foot of the indomitable Lundy—both gentle by nature and appealing to the good in humanity instead of rousing the evil, but both without fear, however conciliatory. Woolman, in his calling of itinerant preacher, did not hesitate to remonstrate when he saw the abuses of slaveholding in the South. Emancipation, but not of a sudden, ill-considered kind, seems to have been the objective point of the Quakers as a whole, in the expression of their anti-slavery principles. "Before the close of the Revolutionary War, slavery had been practically abandoned by the Quakers of the Northern and Middle states." [2] By 1788 substantially

[1] *Anti-Slavery in America*, 1619–1808, Mary S. Locke, p. 24.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

all slaves owned by them in Maryland and Virginia had been emancipated. The example of the Virginia Friends, Warner Mifflin and his wife, who by 1775 had manumitted all their human chattels, was a bright one in the annals of this sect which stands first in anti-slavery and emancipation efforts. Mifflin unceasingly talked, wrote and memorialized against slavery ; he must have been in his day as great a nuisance to the morally inert as Garrison later proved himself. It cannot be said of the Quakers that self-interest would fairly explain their willingness to let go their hold on an uneconomical system, as slavery was proving itself to be even in colonial days, for their natural prudence and sagacity might easily have made the system profitable. Had appeals like Garrison's been addressed to such rational, peace-loving slaveholders as these, he might have accomplished his purpose in the way he insisted upon, without unwittingly provoking a vast civil strife. The efforts of other religious bodies seem slight in comparison, although sporadic attempts, especially among the Baptists and Methodists, were honestly made.

Thus far, to go back a little, all that pointed toward any solution of the grave problem resulted, as we have seen, mostly from religious motives and was said or done by occasional individuals more enlightened than the times in which they lived ; practically nothing had been accomplished by united or organized bodies. The eighteenth century, however, saw the rise of another impulse which affected not only individuals but large bodies

of men, and surged and eddied around the strong bulwarks of ecclesiasticism without especially modifying it. The dogma of the natural rights of man and its corollary, the doctrine of equality, made many changes; they affected if they did not produce the American Revolution and without them there had been no French uprising or Reign of Terror. They were born, as such great movements must be born, of antecedent wrongs and injustices. It was impossible that so general a sentiment should not change men's feelings toward human slavery. Some of those who began to talk about the beauties of liberty discovered that it might also be beautiful for a black slave. "Can any logical inference," asks James Otis, "be drawn from a flat nose, a long or a short face?" John Adams, Samuel Webster, and James Swan of Massachusetts, and the Rev. Samuel Hopkins of Rhode Island, were outspoken in the matter, while Dr. Benjamin Rush in Pennsylvania, and that excellent patriot, Henry Laurens of South Carolina, were no less eager to see ended the strange inconsistency of a country struggling for freedom and independence, yet maintaining under custom and law a portion of its inhabitants enslaved.

Jefferson, who in his younger days trembled for his country in its support of slavery when he reflected that God is just, suffered in his later years from a drying up of the juices of moral enthusiasm; but, as the enthusiast who penned the great manifesto of freedom, he was consistent in his abhorrence, theoretical as it may have been, of the tyranny of

property in man. On the other hand, the tolerant and freethinking Franklin, unlike his friend Whitefield, gained more light as he grew older. Never an idealist, he was immensely humane in practice. When young, though intimate with Sandiford and Lay, he advertised negro-sales in his *Pennsylvania Gazette;* later he saw and wrote upon the economic ineffectiveness of slavery; and before he died he rose to a higher philanthropic plane on the subject. He was incapable, however, of the great enthusiasm of a Garrison, because he was more limited in his moral vision; yet he undoubtedly saw farther in some directions than was possible for the later agitator. Franklin and Dr. Benjamin Rush were leaders of the sentiment against slavery in Pennsylvania, and the former was made the first president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society when it was reorganized under a very long and comprehensive title. John Dickinson, no lover of Benjamin Franklin, was as idealistically uncompromising in his hatred both of slavery and the inconsistency of maintaining it, as any Garrisonian.

To think of Benjamin Franklin in connection with anti-slavery is to recall his friend Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, who was president of the Connecticut Abolition Society, and who, in company with Dr. Hopkins, also had a leaning toward African colonization before colonization began to be regarded with suspicion. In New Haven the second Jonathan Edwards was strongly against the evil, and in 1791 preached a sermon on the injustice and impolicy of the slave-trade and slavery, in which he

urged individual manumission. The first and greater Edwards, however, like the renowned George Whitefield, did believe in negro slavery.[1]

Four Southerners of this period deserve especial mention: George Wythe and St. George Tucker, the former of whom had earlier inclined toward abolition and afterward freed his slaves, while the latter favored gradual emancipation; the Rev. David Rice of Kentucky, and the Rev. James Gilliland of South Carolina, both firm opponents of slavery, the evils of which they had an opportunity of observing at close range. Another clergyman, Jedediah Morse of Connecticut, the geographer, used his widely studied books to inculcate, as chance offered, his views on the subject. William Rawle and Miers Fisher in Pennsylvania, Elias Boudinot and Joseph Bloomfield in New Jersey, John Jay and Gouverneur Morris in New York, Judge Zephaniah Swift, Noah Webster, and Theodore Dwight in Connecticut, all are to be placed in the post-revolutionary ranks of anti-slavery, though the degree of their several enthusiasms differed.

While some were seeking to show that the primitive African was a simple and delightful creature, full of elemental excellencies of the Inkle and Yarico sort, as told by Steele in the *Spectator*, others seem to have had some dim foreshadowing of the biological argument of comparative racial inferiority. Benezet served well his cause by showing that the black man under more favoring conditions was capable of advance.

[1] Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 5.

To a considerable and important extent, not only men but measures before, during and after the Revolution were against the perpetuation of this vexatious contradiction to the animating principles of those days; we are, however, concerned more with opinions than with political or legislative acts, and must be content with remembering that the reaction against slavery in the colonies and the new nation did not end in mere edifying phraseology and philanthropic sentiment. Many have been the attempts to prove that there was an earnest movement in the South, and particularly in Virginia, to mitigate the most trying features of the peculiar institution, and even to work toward some plan of gradual—very gradual—emancipation. Considerable testimony has been advanced to support such a theory, but there is also abundant evidence that even before the development of the anti-slavery sentiment reached any acute stage, resentment and certainly anxiety were shown at interference on the part of outsiders. It was felt in the early days of the agitation as it was felt later, and not without reason, that whether slavery was a burden or not—and there is frequent admission that it was a burden—it must be borne or relieved by that part of the country which had decided, all things considered, to continue the responsibility of assuming and maintaining it.

In 1785, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke, a graduate of Oxford University, and ordained superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church by John Wesley, one of the most fervid haters of slavery, was in

Virginia with Superintendent (later Bishop) Asbury, proclaiming the opposition of his church to the evil and urging petitions for its actual abolition. In one place where he was preaching in a barn, his efforts "provoked many of the unawakened to retire out of the barn and conspire to flog me as soon as I came out. A high-headed lady also went out and told the rioters that she would give fifty pounds, if they would give that little Doctor one hundred lashes." The "little Doctor" suffered no harm, but feeling ran strong against him until he learned that, in raising this subject, it was prudent first to address "the negroes in a very pathetic manner on the duty of servants to masters." Later in the year, a petition for a general emancipation, which Washington, after expressing an agreement with the sentiment of Coke and Asbury, declined to sign, was unanimously rejected, but not, according to Madison, without "an avowed patronage of its principles by sundry respectable members."[1] This incident is cited mainly to show that the resentment of earlier and later days, even in Virginia, against interference from without may have been the same in kind. It is not likely that the sympathy of the "sundry respectable members" excited any antipathy. It does not appear, moreover, that in the Southern states there was pronounced objection to the manumission of certain slaves who had enlisted and served in the Revolutionary War.

The sensitiveness of the South before Garrison's

[1] Colonial Society of Massachusetts, *Transactions*, 1899, 1900, pp. 370–380.

day must not be lost sight of.[1] That it was not raw was because relatively little happened to make it so. The possibility of irritation was ever present. As early as 1825 W. B. Seabrook of Charleston, S. C., took alarm regarding the anti-slavery sentiments expressed in the North, during the ante-Garrison period, at a time when, according to Oliver Johnson, one of Garrison's biographers, and for a time editor of the *Liberator*, "the anti-slavery sentiment of the country had become too feeble to utter even a whisper," and when "the blackness of the darkness of ignorance and indifference . . . then brooded over what we call the moral and religious element of the American people." Mr. Seabrook did not discover such stagnation in the decade before the young Newburyport printer found himself on the road to Damascus, for laboring under strong feeling, he writes "against the constitutional privileges of the slaveholders, to use the horrible and savage language of the *Edinburgh Review*, it would seem as if they [the newspapers and books of the North] had 'declared interminable war—war for themselves and for their children and for their grandchildren—war without peace—war without truce.'" The foresight of this impassioned Southern pamphleteer seems to have been surer than the historical hindsight of the zealous friends of the great Abolitionist, anxious to prove too much, lest they defend their idol not loyally enough.

Now and then was uttered some opinion, well

[1] *The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery in America*, Alice Dana Adams, p. 110.

calculated to rouse the always lurking fear that some day the freer states would no longer remain passive in this matter. When George Thatcher of Massachusetts said, in 1798, in the debate over the prohibition of slavery in the Mississippi Territory that "a property in slaves is founded in wrong, and never can be right," and that "he never could be brought to believe that an individual can have a right in anything which goes to the destruction of our government; *viz.*, that he can have right in a wrong"—he struck at the root of the matter as deeply as Garrison himself. He did not, however, advocate manumission of these slaves, or cry aloud for immediate abolition without indemnity. That proposal, in all its boldness and simplicity, really seems at this time not to have moved the general heart of man. On the contrary, men were open to the seductive argument from the South, that the condition of the slaves would be ameliorated and gradual emancipation become possible if the area of their bondage were enlarged—on the principle, perhaps, that treacle and poison would do less harm spread thin on a large slice of bread than thick on a small one. However unpersuaded by such an argument one might be to-day, at that time it had its effect. The Mississippi Territory was not made free; freedom and slavery were divided by the Ohio; and soon came the Missouri Compromise which still further marked the impressive attempts of slavery to establish itself politically so that it could not eventually be dislodged by popular opposition.

With the wisdom that shrewdly comes in this case, long after the event, it is clear that the spirit of mutual adjustment must have shown the early sympathizers with anti-slavery that the only hope of securing the most desirable thing—the doing away with slavery—lay in effecting something else almost as important—the prohibition of the slave-trade. The more Southern portion of the country could still be approached in this matter, without exciting great antagonism.

The abolition of the slave-trade and the War of 1812, almost immediately following, weakened the general anti-slavery sentiment. There being as yet little of a practical nature and certainly less of anything subversive or revolutionary in the various suggestions for alleviating conditions in the house of bondage, it was natural and inevitable that so practical a thing as war should prove a distraction. It undoubtedly did distract attention from the moral question of slavery as well as from the working of the prohibition of the slave-trade in 1807. On the whole, it is remarkable that only about fifteen years after the close of the war there was sufficient readjustment in the public mind once more to entertain so grave a problem. Had it not been for the general awakening that began in the early thirties and for the pronouncement of the South against the workings of the Tariff of Abominations ending with a threat of secession, it is conceivable that even the energy of a Garrison—for Lundy had failed to make a profound or a general impression—would not have aroused large attention. After the Civil War

the nation was not ripe to entertain any serious question until almost twenty years had elapsed. Up to the first nomination of Cleveland even so practical a matter as the reform of the civil service was lightly or scoffingly regarded except by a relatively few, and they were often objects of derision. It is not unreasonable that a people, always cautious about grasping a fresh conception of duty or interest, should lie fallow as regards moral perplexities after so devastating an event as war.

The compromises of the Constitution by no means extinguished the spirit of liberty best formulated in the Great Declaration, and they only dulled for a time the other and stronger spirit of justice and sense of duty to all mankind. After the Revolution, and until the formal abolition of the slave-trade in 1807, there was what has been called an era of gradual abolition. Mainly by emancipative acts the various Northern states rid themselves of the burden and reproach of slaveholding, though in some states the process of liberation dragged on so gradually that the nineteenth century was well advanced before it could be said there were no slaves north of the dividing line. In Pennsylvania, for instance, notwithstanding the preponderating influence of the Society of Friends, ever one of the strongholds of anti-slavery sentiment, the United States census as late as 1840 reports that there were still forty slaves.

Yet the prohibition of the slave-trade did solidify what there was of anti-slavery sentiment, now possessing a sort of recognition by statute. If the slave-

trade were brought to an end by legislation, slavery itself in time might receive similar consideration. Meanwhile, patience and a constant declaration that slavery was in itself an evil seem to have been the watchword; an actual program or a definite plan to oppose the evil itself did not really exist until Garrison appeared.

The war well over, dormant sensibilities again revived. Travelers and immigrants, it has been pointed out by Miss Locke in her most informing monograph, already cited, now began to make observations of the institution as they actually saw it in passing, and their observations were unfavorable. Besides the continuing efforts, mild as they were, of the various organizations, through conventions and reports, the grave matter of the possible invasion of free territory by slavery was of increasing importance. Indiana was admitted as a state in 1816, and Illinois in 1818, with constitutional prohibitions of slavery. As counterweight on the side of slavery, Mississippi came into the Union in 1817 and Alabama in 1819. Then followed the admission in 1820 of Missouri, the second state (Louisiana being the first in 1812) to be formed out of the Louisiana Purchase. The equipoise of power required that if Maine were to be separated from Massachusetts to form another free state, Missouri must come into the Union committed to slavery. There having been no marked controversy over Louisiana, it was Missouri that occasioned the discussion as to what was to be done about freedom and slavery west of the Mississippi, for the line of freedom

ran to the division north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. The "Missouri Compromise Line" was the parallel of latitude 36° 30′; Missouri came in as a slave state and slavery was shut out of all territory north of the line running west to what were then the Spanish Possessions.

Acting as a setback to the growing activities stimulated by the political exigencies of the day, the American Colonization Society was started in 1816, and enlisted the sympathies of a large number of the respectable and socially important class, both North and South. Occasional petitions to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia were made during the last decade preceding Garrison. As early as 1805 a resolution was presented and rejected in Congress, pointing toward ultimate emancipation in the District; a year earlier, John Parrish held that the government had authority in the District "to prevent some of those evils this degraded part of our fellow men are groaning under."[1] These were precedents of the strenuous efforts of the new abolitionism to eradicate the evil in the one place wherein the government of the United States had power to act if it so chose, without impairing the constitutional rights and privileges of any state.

Of the anti-slavery or abolition societies, little more needs to be said. There is not sufficient reason to doubt their sincerity in pursuing their professed object; and it may safely be assumed that they wished to mitigate and finally to do away with the horrors of slavery and even slavery itself. Their

[1] Locke, p. 163.

general purposes were practically the same, but it is probable that with many their specific activity was devoted to alleviating the lot of the slave, and to caring for free blacks, educationally and in other ways. One hundred and eighteen of these societies have been enumerated as in existence between 1808 and 1831. The most important as well as the first of them was the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. Organized in 1775 and composed largely of Quakers, it declined in activity during the Revolution, and was rehabilitated in 1787, with Franklin as the first president. Other societies mainly followed its plan of organization and work. It was natural that the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery should meet, with but few gaps, each year from 1794 to 1828, in Philadelphia, where what one may call the parent society of Garrisonian abolition afterward had its birth. Ten years later the American Convention was extinct.

It is important to recognize that these earlier organizations proposed nothing insurrectionary, and that their address was made to the sensibilities of all Americans in behalf of what was believed to be a great misfortune rather than a political crime. Yet it is true, from the unbiased standpoint of impersonal history, that they ploughed and harrowed ground which otherwise might have been infertile indeed, when Garrison appeared, like some modern Cadmus, to sow seed that raised a crop of a million armed men.

It would be easily possible to enlarge on these

and other efforts to rouse Americans to an interest in this most vital of problems, but there is no call to do so here. It is enough to have indicated, however rapidly, that "the history of anti-slavery has no gaps." [1]

In the South not only did individuals appear to be in earnest, but collectively there was some movement by way of organization, if not of specific or definite action. In six states, half of them in the later seceding South, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky, over one hundred abolition societies had an existence, though there is ground for believing that many and perhaps most of them were inactive.

A review of the earlier history of the anti-slavery movement is not quite accurate so long as it recognizes only two divisions of the country, the North and the South, without separate reference to the West. The geographical situation of Ohio, and still more of Indiana and Illinois, the first three states cut out of the Northwest Territory, connected them in the years before the westward extension of the railroads more closely with the South than with the North, and immigration into them, especially in their earlier years, was in great measure from the South. The Southerners brought with them widely divergent views of slavery; but it is worthy of remark that while Southern efforts to open the Northwest to slavery were vigorous, no small proportion of the settlers from the South came expressly to be rid of the evil, some even bringing their slaves to emanci-

[1] Locke, p. 8; Adams, p. 252.

pate them in a land of freedom. The Kentucky settlers repulsed at Chillicothe by Indians; the Virginian, Governor Coles, who saved the soil of Illinois to freedom; and the Carolina Quakers in Indiana are merely conspicuous examples of a stream of Southern immigrants carrying to the Northwest a conscientious horror of slavery. As for the Northerners, no one can read of the early abolition societies in Ohio,[1] or follow the discussions in old Indiana[2] papers, or become acquainted with the activity of the itinerant John W. Peck in stirring up the Illinois[3] preachers, without being well assured that many of those who came into the Northwest from Northern states reprobated slavery as a moral evil. It is true that but a small proportion of the population, whether of Northern or Southern origin, were moved by feelings deeper than those of prejudice and self-interest, yet something more vital than the instinct of political self-preservation was already at work in these communities. The sacrifices of some of the anti-slavery men of the Old Northwest and the energy of others are sufficient to prove that neither the whole North nor even the whole South had been "slumbering in the lap of moral death."

We have come, by forced marches, close upon the time when a new energy and a fresh inspiration were to enter a field which had been already occupied

[1] Adams, pp. 148–149.

[2] *Indiana, a Redemption From Slavery*, J. P. Dunn, Jr., pp. 417–436.

[3] *Negro Servitude in Illinois*, N. D. Harris, p. 43.

worthily for many years. The Northwest Ordinance, the abolition of the slave-trade, and the Free-Soil ideas already generated in Illinois and Indiana, were great achievements. But something more definite still was needed toward the fulfilment of a hope avowed by many earnest souls and many widely distributed organizations—and this something was a concrete national plan to do away with the incubus of human bondage. The story of the pre-Garrisonian efforts at best is uninspiring, with occasionally some luminous incident. It is almost wholly wanting in that spontaneity and fervor which sometimes change mere annals into dramatic movement. What had long been the perfunctory discharge of moral obligations, as men saw their duty in the matter, was now to become a strenuous, unremitting challenge to fight, not with the weapons of war but of conscience; the battle was to be no less grim, because it was for many years to be bloodless.

When the young printer sent forth his arrogant demand for immediate abolition and for no union with slaveholders, he appealed to the emotions and the conscience of a country in which, by entirely pacificatory measures, slaveholding had disappeared in one and the stronger half, and from which by legislative enactment the slave-trade had been forever abolished. The line dividing freedom and slavery had been drawn—by compromise to be sure, but how else could it have been drawn? Books, pamphlets, the preacher and the orator at their desks, even the occasional politician on his

stump, memorials and petitions, newspapers, and more than all this, the slow-growing ferment of dissatisfaction in a democracy beginning to come to self-consciousness after being born in one war, and cutting its teeth in a second—these various factors were in a fashion ready to hand when Garrison discovered, after a few years of seeming indifference to the whole matter, that the bondage of one human being by another was an intolerable evil. His achievements were no less great, his genius for moving the hearts and consciences of men was no less wonderful, because, happily, he fitted well into an environment which was not at all feeble because it happened to need so strong a character at the precise time when he rather suddenly appeared. When there is discussion as to preponderant influences in a cause, there is no final agreement possible, but in reflecting upon the activities of the ante-Garrison period, it is comprehensible why Henry Ward Beecher in answer to the question, "Who abolished slavery?" should have answered, "Rev. John Rankin and his seven sons." This was the Rankin, the first edition of whose *Letters on American Slavery* were published at Ripley, O., in 1826, when the author was pastor of the Presbyterian church. Garrison, finding that these letters had "Scriptural pungency," republished them in the *Liberator*. Beecher's saying rather indirectly recalls the irony of Wendell Phillips's remark in Mrs. Chapman's abolition annual, the well-printed and well-edited *Liberty Bell*: "It may yet come to pass that it will be given out as a subject for themes at Harvard,

'Which did the most, Garrison or Calhoun, for the downfall of American slavery?'"

After making the fullest recognition, therefore, of all forerunners, it is due to Garrison's memory to recall the assertion of one who knew him and who observed intelligently. It is safe to agree with Mr. Webb's statement of threescore years ago: "People might talk till doomsday of opposing slavery, or of getting rid of it by some process of infinitesimal slowness; they might propose plans for preparing the slave for freedom, and of leaving off robbery and licentiousness by degrees. Nobody was disturbed by such propositions. But the call to cease at once from these gigantic crimes shook the land like an earthquake, and forced the preacher of this Gospel of Liberty into a position of prominence which he has maintained to the present hour."

CHAPTER II

THE TENTATIVE YEARS

Born on December 10, 1805, William Lloyd Garrison had New England, Irish, and, probably though not certainly, Provincial blood in his veins. From the New England point of view, his New Brunswick ichor was the least desirable of the three strains, for it has never been felt by the inhabitants of that part of our country that the Maritime Provinces have contributed their just proportion to the good results ensuing to the native American stock from vigorous immigration. However unreasonable this Yankee prejudice against the "Blue Noses," such prejudice doubtless exists; but it is within the truth to say that Garrison did not have the traits thought to be typical of the inhabitants of the land of his immediate paternal ancestry. His grandfather on his father's side, Joseph Garrison, may have been an American Loyalist, or may have been and probably was an Englishman found by emigrants from Essex County, Massachusetts, who settled in the Maugerville Grant, New Brunswick, and who included his name among the grantees. He married in 1764 Mary, the third daughter of Daniel Palmer of Rowley, another of the grantees. The fifth of their nine children, born in 1773, was Abijah, father of William Lloyd Garrison.

Though severed from the American Colonies, and closer to the effective control of the British government, the Essex County emigrants were at this time not deaf to the growing clamors for resistance in some form to the mother country. One proof of the direct English origin of Joseph Garrison is that he was not affected by the rebellious sentiments of his associates, and did not sign, as did his father-in-law, a spirited and audacious address entitled "Action of the People on the St. John River," an omission for which he found himself sent to Coventry for a time by his fellow settlers. Compelled by the troops of a visiting British vessel to take the oath of allegiance, these settlers, in spite of their bold declaration, quieted down from necessity. Joseph Garrison died in 1783, leaving no wealth, but transmitting to his posterity an aptitude for music and a tendency to lameness in the male line. Abijah Garrison was a sailor and rose to the position of captain. His son, writing from hearsay, affirms that he had a sound knowledge of navigation, was "genial and social in his manners, kind and affectionate in his disposition." He married Frances Maria (called Fanny), daughter of Andrew Lloyd, of Kinsale, Munster, Ireland. Her mother was also born in Ireland, of an English father and an Irish mother. Fanny was born in Deer Island, New Brunswick, in 1776, and here Abijah romantically found her, hotly wooed, and quickly won her. The date of the marriage is not known, but it was probably just before the opening of the nineteenth century, and at Jemseg, Abijah's birthplace.

Three children were born to this couple before they left St. John, where they lived during the first years of their wedded life. They then went to Granville, Nova Scotia, and later, moved perhaps by sentiment, took voyage for the home of Abijah's maternal ancestry, arriving in Newburyport early in 1805.

Late that year, on December 10th, was born their fourth child, William Lloyd, by good fortune as well as by unmistakable characteristics, a New Englander, but not typically a Massachusetts Puritan. He was too nobly lacking in prudence for that. The house in which he was born still exists, though the interior is much changed. On one side of it stands the parsonage where the great George Whitefield used to lodge during his visits and where he died ; on the other side is the church where Whitefield preached, and beneath which his dust now lies. Nearly opposite was the writing-school where the young Garrison got the beginnings of a far from elaborate education. Of the noble character of his mother, the son gave ample testimony by word and by the following of her precepts. She had an uncommon courage, which was in his case certainly transmitted. Poverty dismayed her as little as it did her illustrious son. And she had withal a complacent, buoyant disposition by means of which she managed to ride over the waves of adversity without shipping too many seas. This amiable trait was also passed on to the next generation, to the incalculable benefit of the inheritor. Religious tolerance, never failing except in the presence of intolerance,

characterized both mother and son. The influence of so admirable a parent must not be lost sight of in a general estimate of a character like Garrison's. He certainly paid full tribute. Besides these traits of character was the gift of a fine personal appearance—not the greatest which the gods bestow, but helpful and a cause for gratitude.

If birthplaces were of our own choosing, a New Englander on the threshold of life a hundred years ago might have hesitated long over Portsmouth, Newburyport, and Salem. All were beautiful and important seaport towns, and each had a flavor quite its own. In each of them ancient dignity and distinction are still well maintained, though commercial changes, steam navigation, and a connecting railroad which has reduced their rivalries to a level of moderate enterprise, have long since robbed them of preëminence. Each was a place where a growing boy might justly feel that his chance in life would depend largely on character and ability, although a local aristocracy, whose sentiments were admirably expressed in the ample and persuasive architecture of those days, made itself felt. It was not, however, oppressive, and those who, like Garrison, were modestly placed, enjoyed the sensibly adjusted democratic conditions which survived the Revolution for nearly fifty years.

Before young William Lloyd was three years old —about the middle of the summer of 1808—Abijah Garrison left his wife and his little family, just diminished by the death of a daughter, and enriched by

the birth of another, and never set foot again in Newburyport. The Garrisons, in the monumental biography of their father, have told this humiliating story of the desertion of his home by their grandfather with their habitual passion for truthfulness, and there need be no lingering over the sorrowful plight and mortification of a woman in her early thirties left with three young children. However, it is necessary to the structure of this narrative of Garrison's life to know that intemperance, at least a too free use of drink, may have been at the bottom of Abijah Garrison's cowardly sin. His wife was vigorous in her disapproval of her husband's wayward appetite, but it would not be in accord with what is known of her to infer that she nagged him to the point of deserting her. No modern theory of dual personality or the *mania errabunda* will explain his flitting, for he was heard of as living and conscious of his own identity as late as 1814, but not later. His indulgence in drink was the evidence of a more essential weakness, and this led him to the final step which one hesitates to call baseness, for it is too vague and unsatisfactory a word. One son followed his father's perverse and self-indulgent ways; the other grew up to an immaculate manhood, as far as moral qualities are concerned, with an abhorrence of all personal, physical vices, and in him, as must be in fairness admitted, there was but little of the paternal inheritance. Genius does not most readily find a nidus in a sound and normal make-up, but seems to settle with avidity into those personalities where are lurking eccentric and dan-

gerous elements. Remembering this, the greater seems Garrison's debt to his mother, and the greater the marvel of his escape, through her normality, from his father's shortcomings.

When this deadening blow to her pride and her hitherto robust health fell upon Mrs. Garrison, living as she did under the protecting kindness of Captain Farnham and his wife in the plain box house on School Street, there was fortunately no immediate danger of finding herself roofless. She turned to that for which her womanly and maternal instincts well adapted her—the occupation of nursing. In New England at that time the calling followed by the mother of Socrates was a respected one. A few years later, Mrs. Garrison went to Lynn, still as a nurse, but leaving her younger son in care of the Bartletts, a worthy Baptist family. By this time he had completed his primary training, in which he showed himself no marvelous scholar, except in handwriting ; and had attended the grammar school for about three months, when Deacon Bartlett's necessities obliged him to use the lad's services to eke out a subsistence for the family. Thus taught by contact with humble poverty, young Lloyd, for so his mother called him, learned the lessons of self-sacrifice and of obligation to others ; but he was not the less a hearty and pleasure-loving boy, fond of all the sports, and taking his part in the rough and tumble, with no misgivings as yet in regard to "non-resistance." It was his good fortune thus early to have mastery in several achievements, among them long-distance swim-

ming. From both parents came to him a love for music, which, early encouraged and cultivated, was a source of enjoyment to him and to others all his life. His boyhood, then, in spite of serious privations, was sane, natural, and wholesome. At the age of nine this child, already familiar with life as a duty and not as a merry-go-round, was apprenticed to a shoe manufacturer in a small way in Lynn, where he had gone to be with his mother, now beginning to need more assistance. Presently the mother and her two boys joined a party of laborers who followed another Lynn manufacturer to Baltimore, to try the making of shoes in that place. The venture was unprofitable, and all hands returned to Lynn with Mr. Newhall, the projector of the enterprise, with the exception of Mrs. Garrison, who again took up her calling with success. Before long, however, her son James ran away to sea, and the steadier boy went back to the Bartletts to get a little more schooling and to earn what he could of a living. The escapades of Garrison are few indeed, yet it may be recalled that at about this time, apprenticed to a Haverhill cabinet-maker, Moses Short by name, the boy became homesick for Newburyport, and tried to get there by "hooking" rides on the stage-coach. He was overtaken by his master, who released him formally when he understood his apprentice's natural longings.

At last, in the fall of 1818, began the definite occupation of his life, when he was apprenticed as a printer's boy to Ephraim W. Allen, editor of a semi-weekly paper, the Newburyport *Herald.* It

was in the office of the *Herald* that sixty years later he went to the case and handled type for the last time. His marvelous persistence began to assert itself and he soon became an expert compositor. Away from him, his mother pined to have her son with her in Baltimore, but with her strong good sense would not call him to her, though she suffered much from physical ailments. It is interesting to note that she acknowledged her obligations, during illness, to Henny, a colored woman "that is so kind no one can tell how kind she is, and although a slave to man, yet a free-born soul, by the grace of God." Thus indirect though sacred was the first recorded contact of Garrison with the race to which he was to consecrate his life.

Still in his teens, the young fellow, having mastered the various details of his craft, was made foreman of the *Herald* office. He was indebted for his success not only to his diligence and skill—often doing his thousand "ems" an hour for several hours at a stretch, but to his associates. Chief among them was Tobias H. Miller, later a Portsmouth city missionary, whose even, benignant temper and encouraging adages and "sententiæ" made a helpful impression on his fellow craftsman.

It is not known whether Garrison ever read the "Autobiography" of Benjamin Franklin; but it would have been natural for him to profit by such an example. In any event there are interesting resemblances in their boyhoods. Neither found his first employment much to his liking, but both, when entered in the printer's trade, through good habits,

perseverance, and unusual skill and aptitude, progressed with marvelous rapidity. Both early felt the value of good reading, but Garrison's range seems not to have been as broad as Franklin's, although, coming just a hundred years later, he had a wider choice. The didactive appealed to both. What Cotton Mather's "Essays to Do Good" were to the earlier, such writings as Mrs. Hemans's poetry were to the later, American. And curiously each tried his 'prentice hand in anonymous contributions to the newspaper published in the office where he was employed, and each was successful. The "Do Good" letters find their counterpart in the wise cogitations of "An Old Bachelor." The analogy might be carried farther, and it might be shown how both these eminent youths were inspired by a passion for self-improvement, which developed on widely differing paths into a strong desire to benefit mankind. Considering that one was the most eminently practical of all Americans, and that the other was in the front rank of our idealists, the recognition of such resemblances is not unprofitable.

Long before he was twenty Garrison had become interested in political controversies, mainly through a reading of Fisher Ames's defenses of Federalism; but the fascination of party contest still kept him, as it kept others, blind to the moral inconsistencies involved in our national existence. William Lloyd Garrison was then as insensible to the question of slavery as was that cold, astute, political craftsman, Caleb Cushing, for whose editorials in the *Herald* the young man must have often set up the type, and

who was personally interested in the young apprentice. That he was now capable of moral indignation, however, aside from his political fervor, is seen in his hatred of the Holy Alliance and of its menace to universal liberty. To his mother, at this time, he confided the fact—a secret no longer—of his continued contributions to his employer's paper, and expressed surprise at his own success, "seeing I do not understand one single rule of grammar, and having a very inferior education."

After the death of her daughter Elizabeth in 1822, the mother was lonesome and longed to see her son once more. Accordingly, in June, 1823, almost a year after his sister's death, the young Garrison set out by sea for Baltimore, sailing from Boston, a city which he then saw for the first time. The place seemed inhospitable to him, because he was unknown. A decade later, when he was no stranger within its gates, Boston's mood was actively hostile, not passively indifferent. The meeting of mother and son after a separation of seven years was to be their last, for shortly following his return, she died at the early age of forty-five, worn by her labors and the burden selfishly or insanely laid upon her by her faithless husband.

Federal politics, more bitter as the Federalist influence grew less, engaged the young printer's spare time, and, under the signature of "Aristides," he defended the acrid "Tim" Pickering, and otherwise kept in the field as a writer on public matters. Among his friends at this time was a youth named Isaac Knapp, who was importantly associated with

Garrison some years later. As Franklin was a leading spirit in the "Junto" among youth of similar condition in life, so Garrison was active in a debating club. Earnestness, not frivolity, took possession of both these men at a critical period. Yet the *Wanderlust* was not unknown to the ambitious printer of Newburyport. He felt the impulse which took a great American, Samuel G. Howe, and a yet greater Englishman, Lord Byron, to the war for Greek independence. West Point even did not seem to him then, as it did some years later, the least desirable of human goals. But these were healthy yearnings, and strengthening to the natural sanity of his character.

Finishing his apprenticeship on the *Herald* at the end of 1825, Garrison, in March of the following year, issued the first number of the *Free Press*, which succeeded the *Essex Courant*, owned by Knapp but abandoned necessarily by him on account of his health. Garrison's old master, Allen, stood back of the enterprise. Always fond of a motto, Garrison gave his paper the sounding one of "Our Country, Our Whole Country, and Nothing but Our Country,"—a sentiment which he later utterly repudiated. With an independence well in advance of an era when partisanship was the breath of men's nostrils, the bold editor and publisher promised brave things of his paper. "It shall be subservient to no party or body of men: and neither the craven fear of loss, nor the threats of the disappointed, nor the influence of power, shall ever awe one single opinion into silence." It was a sonorous, perhaps an arrogant

declaration, but it was sincere, and prophetic of that far simpler sentence, with which Garrison was soon to throw out the *Liberator* as a banner to the winds, in defiance of all the wealth, power and learning of a country already conscious of its possibilities and conscious too that it was under conviction of sin. The orotund and intensely prosaic style of the eighteenth century, so evident in the writings of nearly all our own publicists, was an inheritance to the generation in which Garrison found himself. He was not by any means free from the influence of this style, for he had founded his mode of expression on obvious models, and the new influence beginning to come here from abroad was still academic and confined to trained minds. In spite of all this conventional influence, however, Garrison was beginning to make his own style, and to say things in exactly the way he wished to say them. He was supported in his efforts by that potent aid, necessity, for he was obliged to compose his editorials in type, not on paper, and thus, because the setting of type is and always will be laborious, he inevitably gained in power of compression and of definite statement. The issue for May 18, 1826, contains his earliest significant reference to the evil of negro slavery, in a commendation of a just published poem on "Africa," written by a young woman. A month later he again refers editorially to the "unchiding eye," as the poetess terms it, of the nation on this forbidden topic.

About this time he received a poem, written in the metrical fashion of Woodworth's "Old Oaken

Bucket" by one signing himself "W., Haverhill," who soon proved to be Whittier, then making shoes at East Haverhill and inclined, as few cobblers have been, to stick to his last until dragged unwillingly into such glare of publicity as the restricted circulation of the *Free Press* could give him. The story of the discovery of the shy poet by the editor who, beyond a kindly, generous heart, and a persistent character, had few opportunities to play the part of Mæcenas, belongs to American literature. But the friendship between them, all-important to both in another and perhaps greater sense, lasted during life, though there was a time when Whittier, who was far more of a politician than Garrison, could not follow all his friend's conclusions.

After six months the *Free Press* was sold and at once changed its politics, to support the candidature of Caleb Cushing for Congress; in three months more it had ceased to exist. Garrison at least found by this experience that an independent editor would "hardly be praised for his labors." A few months' work as a journeyman printer, and Garrison parted company with Newburyport, but not before he had attacked Caleb Cushing in a public meeting held in behalf of the latter. December, 1826, found him in Boston, on his third visit to that place. Generously suffered to stay, without present means, at a boarding-house kept by one Bennett, then printing, under the editorship of David Lee Child, the *Massachusetts Weekly Journal*, it was some weeks before Garrison found employment. During the following year he worked in not fewer and

probably in more than four different places, among them in Child's office. Discouragement over the outlook for a livelihood did not weaken his interest in politics, and he dashed with ardor into an unsuccessful movement to nominate Harrison Gray Otis to Congress, *vice* Daniel Webster, who had been elected to the Senate. This precipitate conduct on the part of so young a stranger to the town brought him into a lively controversy in the *Boston Courier* with an unknown signing himself "S.," who accused Garrison of verbosity, forth-putting conduct, and youthful impudence. Garrison, like the young Chatham, or rather Dr. Samuel Johnson for him, resented the imputation that youth was a crime, and not without dignity asserted that obscure as he might be then, his name would "one day be known to all the world." It was an early instance of Garrison's skill in pressing in through any weak part of an adversary's defense.

Life under larger conditions soon began to do Garrison good; he went to churches of various denominations, though still clinging to his own—the Baptist—and even admired at long social range the charms of Miss Emily Marshall, who later married a son of that Otis whose cause the young stranger had championed. In the spring of 1828, Garrison became co-editor and publisher of the *National Philanthropist*, with Nathaniel H. White, a roommate at the house of William Collier, who had established this first unqualified total abstinence paper ever issued, and who disposed of his venture to these young men after two years of struggle to

make a one-ideaed enterprise profitable. Garrison's reformatory instincts now began to assert themselves; moderate drinking; the "treating" common at May training and other public occasions when the militia enjoyed a foretaste of the debauchery of war without its perils; the drunkenness at house-raisings and ship-launchings—these and all forms of intemperance were ardently assailed. Needless to say, the public did not ardently support a paper which dealt so ungraciously with its cherished indulgences.

The young editor now began to show his appetite for universal reform; he launched forth vigorously not only against intemperance, and temperance too for that matter, but also against Sabbath breaking, lotteries, infidelity; proclaimed the virtues of peace; and began thus early to recognize the desirability of securing the aid of women on equal terms in plans for social advancement. In January, 1828, he wrote some forceful words against the bill passed by the South Carolina legislature forbidding the teaching of negroes to read and write, and in March first met the man who was to concentrate his moral and intellectual vigor upon one absorbing and dominating purpose. Benjamin Lundy, a New Jersey Quaker, and a saddler by trade, had then just passed his thirty-ninth birthday. For thirteen years already he had been persistently talking and writing against human slavery in all its forms. After some tentative newspaper work, and the loss of much of the money he had accumulated at his trade, he issued in July, 1821, at Mount Pleasant, O., the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. It was the legitimate suc-

cessor in spirit of Elihu Embree's *Emancipator*, started the year previous in Tennessee, and far more radical than the Rev. John Finley Crow's rather tame *Abolition Intelligencer*, issued at Shelbyville, Ky., in 1822, though to him we owe the telling phrase "soul-peddling" as his synonym for slave-selling. In the words of the Garrisons, the newspaper "was begun without a dollar of capital, and with only six subscribers."

No small part of Lundy's time was spent in traveling on foot and rarely on horseback, to carry out his unalterable plans. After three years, during which his paper gradually throve, it was moved from Tennessee, whither he had taken it, to Baltimore, nearer the seat of coming warfare—the editor walking the whole distance, and sowing good reform seed, especially among members of his sect, as he passed on. Lundy's obscurity and the breadth of his program, which called for "gradual" emancipation of the slave, saved him from odium at Baltimore, which was as ready as he to favor any intelligent scheme for the colonization of people of color. The *Genius* later became a weekly paper, and continued to grow, while the editor pushed his influence by journeys, meetings, and the formation of societies. Lundy reached Boston, by way of Philadelphia, New York, and Providence, making powerful friends to his cause on the journey, and there met the most potent character of all whom he was to influence. The earnest, undersized peripatetic, devoid of the charms of oratory, and afflicted with the infirmity of deafness, soon found a warm

enthusiast in the well-nigh physically perfect Garrison. He was not so welcome to the Laodicean clergymen in Boston, who hated slavery enough to recommend Lundy's paper as safe reading, but who were unwilling to rouse their city from its comfortable moral slumber by helping to start an anti-slavery society. It did not then seem probable that the unawakened young giant, now only twenty-two years old, although he cordially approved Lundy's work in the columns of the *Philanthropist*, would be the one to carry it far beyond the bounds set by that devoted reformer. But in this first visit, the fructifying seed was sown in Garrison's mind. It took a second visit a few months later for Lundy to discover that "philanthropists are the slowest creatures breathing." A foretaste of coming experiences was had by Lundy when he made a public address for the first time in Boston on August 7, 1828. This was reported by Garrison, who had meanwhile given up the *Philanthropist*. Lundy's proposition to start petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia—the forerunner of those petitions which in the fast approaching years were to make so much trouble in national legislation and to keep the agitation against slavery alive whenever it seemed to languish—was too radical for the taste of the pastor of the Federal Street Baptist Church where Lundy was speaking, and he closed the meeting. Lundy, writing later to Garrison, of whom he now felt sure, reminded him that everything in his endeavor depended "on activity and steady perseverance," but that the

labor "would mostly fall on the shoulders of a few." He certainly happened on a coadjutor with the needed qualities and the patient shoulders. During this very month Garrison was writing to John Neal, the peppery editor of the *Yankee*, who had been twitting him on his obscurity, that his name would "one day be known so extensively as to render private inquiry unnecessary." "The task," he closes, with pardonable incision, "may be yours to write my biography."

Garrison, when young, seems to have been a partisan in politics, as he was in religion. The conservatism of youth, so often seen in those who become more radical as they grow older, has been held to be a sign in the heavens of the development of an able man. The doctrine holds true in Garrison's case; for until he had found a vantage-ground for his uncommon moral activities, it was natural that he should exercise them in the defense of those in whom he believed. In Newburyport he had championed party views, in spite of protestations of independence, and his coming to Boston began, as has been seen, with an attempt politically to aid the cause of Harrison Gray Otis. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Garrison, as the national campaign of 1828 was opening, accepted the editorship of a paper, to be published in Bennington, Vt., for the purpose of advocating the reëlection of John Quincy Adams, and opposing the candidacy of Andrew Jackson. Started as late as October in 1828, the year of the national election, and published at two dollars a year, the *Journal*

of the Times, if partisan, was neither subservient nor narrow. The newcomer in Bennington proclaimed independence as his standard and assailed as the most despicable and degraded of beings the "time-serving, shuffling, truckling editor." The suppression of intemperance, the gradual emancipation of the slave, the perpetuity of national peace, the cause of popular, practical education, and the encouragement of industries by means of the American System—these were side issues to be advanced along with the candidacy of the younger Adams, of whom Garrison did not then, or perhaps ever, pretend to be especially fond. It was not in the temperament of either to love the other, but the time came when mutual respect was inevitable. The violence of his attacks on Jackson left nothing to be desired, though with a journalist's instinct Garrison seems to have presaged the defeat of his own side. From the first, as far as his limited space allowed, he urged the formation of anti-slavery societies, mainly, however, with a view to advancing the propaganda of colonization. Within a month he had written and set in motion a petition to Congress for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, on the only ground then tenable—that such abolition would interfere with the rights of no state. In a few weeks, through the hearty coöperation of the postmasters of Vermont, he had secured considerably over two thousand names throughout the state, and the petition was presented on January 26, 1829. Earlier in this month the motion of Representative Charles

Miner of Pennsylvania for legislation tending to gradual abolition in the District had been supported by a decided majority. The Vermont petition fared badly before the Committee on the District of Columbia, which frowned heavily on such attempts to disturb prevailing conditions and maintained that the local slave-trade was often a benefit to the slaves by removing them to other fields of enforced labor. To-day this suggestion reads like the finest irony, but at that time it only showed that the South, which appeared to take suggestions of a remote and "gradual" emancipation with reasonable complaisance, was quick to resent, as it did through this committee, any movement so radical as the Garrison petition.

Working with zeal and ability, the young country editor put his best into the *Journal of the Times*, and upheld without flinching such reforms as seemed vital. No religious doubts at this time had begun to disturb his orthodoxy, for he had not found out, as he did later, that when belief and self-interest did not square, it was not self-interest which usually suffered. He even dressed with noticeable care, made and retained valuable friendships, and was an orderly and a well-conducted citizen. This period of his life, in spite of hard and efficacious work, was one of incubation and strengthening for trials soon to come.

Meanwhile Benjamin Lundy, watchful at all times lest his adherents should waver, had made sure that Garrison was to be counted upon; although in the columns of his *Genius* he had found

it advisable to strengthen his young convert's purpose by praising his loyalty to the cause of emancipation. In the flush of dawning success, Garrison was persuaded by Lundy, who had gone afoot from Baltimore to Bennington, to become the active editor of the *Genius*, while Lundy should continue his walks about the country to secure more subscribers and thus also sow more seeds of reform. The last editorial by Garrison in the *Journal* appeared on March 27, 1829, announcing that the time had now come for him to "engage in a higher enterprise" in behalf of the slave population. "I trust in God," he adds, "that I may be the humble instrument of breaking at least one chain, and restoring one captive to liberty ; it will amply repay a life of severe toil." The keynote of his endeavor was struck in his statement, "Reason has prevailed with me more than popular opinion." Never was choice more deliberate or more mature in so young and ardent a man. He gave up a definite and practical work, already showing good return, for another of the greatest uncertainty and wholly without promise of concrete achievement or ultimate results.

Garrison's career in Bennington must have given him some reputation, for on his arrival in Boston on his way southward, he was invited on the Fourth of July to address the Congregational churches in behalf of colonization. This was not equal in importance to an invitation from the civic authorities, but it had its significance. In Boston to be thus requested by any large body of citizens

was at that time a sort of endorsement of character. The place was Park Street Church, where a few years later "America" was sung for the first time, and the theme was "Dangers to the Nation." These Park Street celebrations, which had begun in 1823, were in sentiment partly religious, partly patriotic, and strongly anti-slavery. Garrison was the seventh orator in the series. Shortly before Independence Day, he for the first time suffered for his opinions. He was obliged to submit to the cost of a writ and fine for non-appearance at May training—an exercise in what he calls a "sanguinary school," for which he had no inclination. The incident was slight but demonstrated that from the start no thought of compromise was ever entertained by him. Later he suffered imprisonment and even personal violence. Private and public abuse grew to be the atmosphere which he necessarily inhaled, because it completely surrounded him, but while he never flinched, neither did he ever show fight. His natural good-humor always combined to turn what was meant for stern if misguided public disapproval into an ironical situation.

The oration, for such it proved to be, was preceded by an ode written for the occasion by the Rev. John Pierpont and sung under the leading of Lowell Mason. Pierpont had, at about this time, fallen somewhat under the displeasure of the public through giving way to his unfortunate penchant for telling the truth, even though his words tweaked the port-wine noses of respectable Boston. The

orator first assailed prevailing social and political weaknesses, but, this obviously rhetorical duty done, plunged head down at the national affliction, human slavery, "debasing in its effect, cruel in its operation, fatal in its continuance." He attacked the narrowness of conventional patriotism in saying, "I pity the man whose heart is not larger than a whole continent"; in Boston's central fane of orthodoxy he exclaimed, "What has Christianity done, by direct effort, for our slave population? Comparatively nothing. She has explored the isles of the ocean for objects of commiseration; but, amazing stupidity! she can gaze without emotion on a multitude of miserable beings at home." He asserted "the rights of the free states to demand a gradual abolition of slavery," though he did not admit the right or the disposition to use coercive measures. He discerned no immediate prospects of emancipation, but a "collision, full of sharp asperities and bitterness . . . with the insolence, and pride, and selfishness, of many a heartless being." These foes he expected to conquer by "meekness, and perseverance, and prayer." More important than all this, and sounding the note of his attack not on the South but on the general deadness of conscience, he added, "We are all alike guilty. Slavery is strictly a national sin; New England money has been expended in buying human flesh; New England ships have been freighted with sable victims; New England men have assisted in forging the fetters of those who groan in bondage." Leaving this cud of bitter re-

flection for self-righteous yet thoughtful Boston, he started soon upon his southward journey. The late Rev. Leonard Woolsey Bacon, son of that more illustrious Rev. Leonard Bacon, the champion of colonization who once admitted publicly that "he rarely spoke of the devil in the pulpit and never of Mr. Garrison," said of this oration by the young editor: "He could repeat the familiar commonplaces of his six predecessors as if they were startling novelties and speak of the slaves, the subjects of more thought, sympathy, prayer and self-denying effort than any other class of people in the country, as those 'over whose sufferings scarcely an eye weeps or a heart melts or a tongue pleads either to God or man,' for whom 'Christianity has done by direct effort comparatively nothing' "—an excellent epitome of the anti-Garrison sentiment.

The close of this first portion of his career leaves him not yet clear as to the precise course to follow, but committed to attack in some fashion the vexing problem of human bondage.

CHAPTER III

EDITOR AND PAMPHLETEER

LUNDY, who, since leaving his new partner in Bennington, had gone to Hayti with some emancipated slaves and had returned, was waiting for Garrison when the latter arrived in Baltimore in August, 1829. This patient yet restless soul would doubtless have been content to go on indefinitely proclaiming the evils of slavery, scouring the country for subscribers or disciples, starting new societies, and wearing out mind and body by his exhausting labors. It was not so, however, with Garrison, who had already suffered a sea-change, and was now dissatisfied with the rhetorical program of his Fourth of July address. Still trusting in the methods of Providence, he saw his way to accelerate their progress by a demand for immediate, not gradual emancipation. The wonder is that in a practical and direct character like his the doctrine of gradualism could so long have found lodgment. He was now decided, and Lundy was obliged to make a pact by which each should sign his own initials to articles printed in the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, which for the last five of its eight years had been issued weekly. During the editor's trip to Hayti the paper had had one of its intervals of rest—this time eight months—and was

now ready for steady work under the new management, with James Cropper of Liverpool engaged to furnish information as to the state of the public mind in Great Britain over the now active movement for emancipation in the West Indies.

Lundy, who, like Garrison, preferred Hayti to Liberia, and was suspicious of the American Colonization Society, tested the sincerity of "humane conscientious slaveholders" by offering, through a standing advertisement, to transport, free of cost, a considerable number of slaves to Hayti, provided that they were trained to agriculture or mechanical pursuits. Slaveholders were either lacking in a passion for humanity, or else, as is quite likely, failed to see the *Genius*, for nothing came of this liberal and genuine offer.

Garrison's opinions were now crystallizing rapidly. Not only was he beginning to distrust the ingenuousness of the Colonization Society, though he did not yet break with it, but he was coming to see the hostile animus in the South against the free negro. At about this time he announced one of his dogmas—and they were many: the perfect equality of all portions of the human race. Given the same chance, the result would be "equally brilliant, equally productive, equally grand," no matter "how many breeds are amalgamated." It may be said here that the word "biology" in its present sense was not born until after Garrison's ideas had become fixed. Whether, had he known the postulates of this new phase of scientific thought, he would in any wise have modified his own extreme

opinions, it is impossible to say. But it is safe to assert that had the scientific advance, under such headship as that of Charles Darwin, reached the point in 1830 at which it had arrived forty years later, there had been no such extremists in their sphere of social ethics as William Lloyd Garrison and his followers.

There still lingers in the public mind a belief that had the national government contrived a plan to buy the slaves of their owners, in some way the loss and the cost of the Civil War might have been avoided. Garrison thus early did not favor such a compromise as national purchase. Slavery was wrong, and a bargain with slaveholders was compounding a felony. Justice and not a trade was what he demanded in the *Genius*. He was warm in his opposition to the making and selling of ardent spirits; he cried loudly against the breaches of faith with the Georgia Indians; he early favored—though mildly—the boycott of the products of slave labor: in these and various other reforms, he was zealous in the columns of Lundy's paper. But he still kept within his religious circumscriptions, and, strangely enough, was wholly conservative as regards the greater political freedom of women—even dubbing a petition of some Pennsylvania women for recognition of the rights of Indians, "an uncalled-for interference."

While Lundy and Garrison were thus working faithfully together and at the same time pulling slowly apart, not in hostility but like vessels bound on the same long errand, each on its individual

course into wider seas, a few things of import to their cause were happening. Guerrero, the President of Mexico, had emancipated some ten thousand slaves in that country, then including Texas. This territory was already marked as the vantage-ground where slavery could be strengthened, provided that it could be brought by some means into the Union—a scheme which the unworldly but not unobservant Lundy was quick to denounce. The inoperative American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery held its twenty-first biennial session late in the year 1829, and repeated its usual program of doing nothing to anger the South or to arouse the North. The condition of this "convention," which first met in Philadelphia in 1794, is clearly shown by the fact that it held its next and last meeting in 1838. But while these incidents were taking place, something vital occurred to show that the South was watchful, if not alarmed. "Walker's Appeal," published by David Walker, a Boston negro, attacked ably and with vigor the policy of the Colonization Society, and naturally assailed the whole institution of slavery. Its third edition (1830) countenanced slave insurrections—a horror of which the South had always been genuinely afraid; but even before the edition appeared, Garrison had written in the *Genius* that he "deprecated" the circulation of this powerful essay. A price was set on the head of the author, who, happily perhaps for him, died a few months later, though not before the Mayor of Boston (Harrison Gray Otis) had found it necessary to

answer demands from the South for his punishment. It is not wholly clear at this day why Garrison, even in this period of his development, should have regarded the pamphlet as "most injudicious"; he had already denounced slavery in the abstract in equally violent terms. The precipitation of a crisis is seldom injudicious from the revolutionary point of view, and it was fortunate for Garrison's cause that the "Appeal" produced in one Southern state (Georgia) a stringent law, forbidding the admission of free blacks, or the teaching of any blacks, slave or free, to read or write, and making it a capital offense to circulate pamphlets of "evil tendency among our domestics."

Now at last Garrison was to suffer a little for the very truth's sake—the truth, as he saw it and spoke it and wrote it.

Thus far he had been let alone and allowed to say and write what he pleased—a tolerance not wholly satisfactory even to the most philosophic of reformers. But when in the *Genius* he accused Francis Todd of Newburyport of engaging in the domestic slave-trade between Baltimore and New Orleans, he found Lundy and himself involved in a suit for libel brought by Todd, and in an action for publishing the alleged libel brought by the Grand Jury of Maryland. Though well defended at the trial, Garrison was found guilty on the state of Maryland's charge. Unable to pay the fine and costs, about one hundred dollars in all, he was imprisoned for seven weeks in Baltimore jail beginning April 17, 1830—as innocent and pure-minded

a culprit as ever found himself on the wrong side of prison-bars. Several results ensued from this legal restraint of the young editor. The partnership with Lundy was dissolved, and the *Genius of Universal Emancipation* was henceforth issued monthly, the weekly issue having ceased on March 5, 1830. Captain Nicholas Brown, who carried the slaves in the ship *Francis*, never carried another live cargo, nor did the respectable Mr. Todd henceforth undertake to send one.

No man ever demonstrated more faithfully that "stone walls do not a prison make" than the new denizen of Baltimore jail. He helped and encouraged the prisoners; he remonstrated with the owners of runaway slaves ("slavites" is a word apparently of his own coining); he often sat at the warden's table, wrote a pamphlet on his trial, and on the walls of his cell or "multicapsular apartment," as he termed it, inscribed one of his best sonnets beginning, "High walls and huge the body may confine." Other sonnets and verses followed under the stimulus of confinement without contrition for having done right. With no close resemblance, these poetical effusions recall John Bunyan's much less melodious efforts under similar conditions. Garrison's powers of versification and his ability to make an apt Latin quotation whenever he needed one, are not easily explicable, when we consider that although he was not an ignorant man, he could not fairly be called an educated one. Franklin also had the fashion of using Latin whenever he needed it. This facility in these two remarkable men may per-

haps be attributed to the educational influence of the printer's case.

To this by no means dismal, but very persistent cry from the tombs, now couched in verse and again in wonderfully vigorous prose, the country at large began to make answer. Newspapers mentioned and often espoused the cause of this happy warrior, who was not beating against his bars but was getting a larger audience than he had when free. Even Henry Clay, the most lovable opportunist of American political history, was inclined, through the intercession of Whittier, to help pay the fine, but Arthur Tappan, of New York, the warm-hearted sustainer of many good causes, with whom Garrison afterward had occasion to disagree, preceded him with money for the editor's release, which took place on June 5th. It was long before such a rest came again into Garrison's life.

Calling on Tappan on his way home, he soon reached Newburyport, a far better known man than when he last left it. By July he was back in Baltimore, aided by the receipt through Lundy of one hundred dollars from an entire stranger, Ebenezer Dole, of Hallowell, Me., a gift which he accepted, with characteristic simplicity and openness, as a loan on interest. He had returned to Baltimore, after an unsuccessful attempt at home, to get means to revive the weekly publication of the *Genius*, and to face Todd's personal suit for libel, but was unable to wait until the trial in the fall. The suit being uncontested, a verdict was rendered for the plaintiff with damages for one thousand dol-

lars, with the loser outside of the Maryland jurisdiction.

Garrison then did the inevitable thing, for in August he issued a prospectus for an abolition paper to be published in Washington and called the *Public Liberator and Journal of the Times.* It was to oppose war, and the distillation, importation, selling, drinking or offering to drink, of alcoholic liquors, and was to give "a dignified support to Henry Clay and the American System."

In the fall of 1830 he lectured in Philadelphia and in New York, but attracted no special attention, except among those whose sympathies had already been aroused against the evils of slavery. Of more importance to him was the meeting at this time with James and Lucretia Mott. Still narrow in his religious views, he was touched by their broad spirit. With Dr. Leonard Bacon he did not get on so well. "The jesuitry of his reasoning" struck Garrison, and time did not heal the breach which opened at their first meeting over the question of colonization. All the hard words ever uttered against this worthy champion of a more moderate policy by the never compromising, never conciliatory radical have been paid back with equal vehemence by Dr. Bacon's son.

It had taken Garrison a reasonably long time to arrive at definite conclusions and to plan an offensive campaign. It was now becoming clear to him, as his own religious certitudes became less firm, that supineness on the part of the Christian Church and of all denominations in it, was preventing the

acceptance of such doctrines as he would fain spread. As was the only course in those days, he always looked for his audiences among people who were interested in various phases of moral and religious welfare—among the distinctly middle ranks, the general human average. He was too wise from the beginning to seek a fashionable hearing, for he knew the spiritual deadness of the comfortable classes. A man with experience himself in the humble walks of life, he had the advantage of knowing that the proletarian is not easily aroused over problems in which his own betterment is not involved. Therefore he usually sought to influence his own kind, the earnest obscure idealists of everyday living who when sufficiently awakened can accomplish,—and best under democratic conditions,—results impossible even to great wealth, high position, and transcendent abilities. To move this impressionable yet cautious mass of thought, he must make a diversion in those ranks to which his constituency was still allied with an attachment difficult to understand in these days of looser, certainly more tolerant, religious bonds. Already he had begun to proclaim that a "Christian slaveholder is as great a solecism as a religious atheist, a sober drunkard, or an honest thief," but soon he was to strike nearer home, for he knew that as long as the North was morally asleep, the South could well afford to nod, with one eye open for particularly objectionable assaults on its "peculiar institution." In his native town he was allowed to make one speech in a Congregational church, and perhaps

might not have had the door shut against him the second night, had he contented himself with portraying the evils of slavery. Listening to such addresses was then a mild sort of pastime; the blood of the conventionally righteous is always gently stirred at recitals of iniquity sufficiently remote. But when Garrison told his fellow townsmen that New Englanders were "equally culpable with the slave dealers and slave owners," it was more than the honest, debt-paying, God-fearing, unidealistic majority of the church people could stand, and so Garrison, letting fly a newspaper barb only moderately tipped with severity, left for Boston, early in October, 1830.

It was not till the middle of the month that Garrison, whose communications to the Boston *Transcript* on his favorite topic had met with a closure from the cautious editor, could find a hall in which to speak—and this hall was offered by freethinkers to one who was still a consistent member of the Baptist church. In the audience met to hear him were six men of prominence, three of whom, Lyman Beecher, Ezra Gannett, and Moses Grant, remained conservative toward the anti-slavery movement, while the other three, Samuel J. May, Samuel E. Sewall, and A. Bronson Alcott were soon to be reckoned on the radical side, though Alcott could never be called a true Garrisonian. This early division among chance hearers, three of whom were ministers, was prophetic of the sharp social cleavage soon to take place as this obscure man of daily toil made himself more and more felt. He was now thoroughly con-

vinced of the disingenuousness of the colonization policy, and the burden of his speech was on this subject. Lyman Beecher's coolness may easily have been more firmly set by this attack on a movement which naturally appealed to his more elderly, but not ungenerous mind as a somewhat imperfect yet not hopeless attempt to work toward a good end. While the leader of orthodoxy shrank through temperament and training from the fiery zeal of this young enthusiast, the more receptive May was warmed by new fires, and soon found himself at odds with the conservative side of Unitarianism. As a religious body, the Unitarians, in spite of their successful schism perfected in the first third of the nineteenth century, were by no means without coldness and reserve toward ethical and intellectual novelties. At the same time, when we consider the various attitudes of the general religious mind of the country, the balance is somewhat in favor of Unitarianism as regards its part in anti-slavery annals. It was cold, officially, toward Transcendentalism, the Brook Farm movement, and the more radical side of anti-slavery ; but had there been no Unitarianism, with its disintegrating tendency, the movement under Garrison against a united orthodoxy would have proceeded less swiftly. As it was, just as soon as the whole anti-slavery sentiment gained, with the next ten years, a real footing, it came to pass that the more centralized Evangelical church, with its machinery, such as the radicals never possessed, found a way to divide the now fast-running stream of public opinion into channels shrewdly contrived

to irrigate both orthodoxy and a more gently tempered sentiment against the sin of human slavery.

It will be seen that as long as Garrison dealt with the personal conscience, and appealed to this and that individual to come over to his way of thinking, he was supremely successful; when he threatened organized religion, he met a force against which all voices crying in the wilderness have generally been unable to contend with entire success. Just at present he was beginning to get here and there a hopeful convert, notably such men as May and Sewall of the devoted, loyal type.

Without a press to push the evangel of any reform, the liveliest human eloquence is a voice and nothing more. Garrison moved as swiftly as he moved earnestly, when he succeeded in issuing the first number of the *Liberator* on the first day of the year 1831, for it was only in August, 1830, that he had put out his prospectus for the paper which he intended to edit in Washington. His earlier motto was "My country is the world; my countrymen are mankind," and this sentiment, with the change of "My" to "Our" was adopted as the legend for the *Liberator*. There was no "promotion" of this scheme, no advance heralding, no efforts to saddle the burden of the enterprise on the public by issuance of bonus-carrying stock. It was a simple, straightforward newspaper undertaking, relying on ability and earnestness and not on prizes or other modern encouragements to buy a mediocre thing. The type for the first three issues was borrowed, and

then some second-hand type was secured from a foundry. A hand-press did the printing. Garrison was the editor, but his publishing partner was Isaac Knapp, who had been with him in Newburyport. The office was also their home and here, for a year and a half, they ate, slept, and composed their type. It was Garrison's good fortune, as has before been noted, to be able to set up his editorials from his brain into his composing stick, a great saving in the laboriousness of composition and a constant check on verbosity. With the aid of a colored assistant, who later graduated from Dartmouth College, these indefatigable young men, by dint of working fourteen hours a day, were able each week to set up and distribute as many as 100,000 types, run their press and mail their papers, to say nothing of the labor of editing the "copy." In the first issue appeared Garrison's famous manifesto: "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—*and I will be heard.*" It must be generously admitted that he swerved in no way from this grim program until the last slave in the nation was free. He recanted his earlier belief in gradual abolition, and stood for the "immediate enfranchisement of our slave population." With politics and differing religious sects he purposed to have no affiliations, although he welcomed all coöperation with the cause he espoused. But money as well as zeal and self-sacrifice was needed, and this, in occasional crises, was supplied by Ellis Gray Loring and Samuel E. Sewall, sturdy friends of the man and the cause.

From the opening number there was much in the *Liberator* to irritate the pro-slavery element. The famous cut of a slave auction conducted within sight of the nation's capital, which surmounted the name of the paper, was galling, and often elicited a "deep and bitter curse"; even Sewall objected to it. If it was "rude," as the Garrisons admit, it certainly was effective, as well as typical of an era when it seemed requisite, in any graphic presentation of human activity, for all characters portrayed to be crowned with a tall beaver hat, whether the wearer were engaged in driving an engine, hunting a fox, taking an oath of office, witnessing a prize-fight, or, as in the present instance, buying and selling slaves.

It was not long before Garrison had reason to believe that he was getting a hearing; and this was what he desired. There is no evidence to show that making money or even a livelihood out of his paper had entered his head. From here and there subscribers drifted in; even the generally apathetic free blacks seemed to take a practical interest in the new venture. But abuse, loud and increasing, was the real sign that his strident cry against the greatest barrier to human development, and to him, the deepest sin of all the black sins of the race, was heard. The Abolitionists early saw that little was to be gained by talking solely to the already converted. They, therefore, did not seek to call the righteous to repentance, but sedulously and skilfully inflamed their opponents and gradually performed the far harder task of arousing the inatten-

tive minds of the morally indifferent. By provoking replies to their own exhaustless vocabulary of abuse and criticism, they began to put the pro-slavery side on the defensive. Now human nature will long tolerate a slumbering evil, but when the monster rears its head and begins to argue its case, then moral torpidity, even among the complacently respectable, disappears and healthier conditions prevail. In this sort of warfare, Garrison was a sure strategist. He had a power to irritate not excelled even by Wendell Phillips, who is to appear somewhat later. To a South Carolina editor, who calls him an "apostate Yankee" and promises to bring his "bundle of sedition" under the ban of law, should he show himself within that state, Garrison gives assurance that he intends as soon as possible to move the *Liberator* to some slave state where he "can meet the enemy on his own ground." Doubtless he meant this, but it was before he felt that disquieting rope about his body, placed there only a few months later by a fairly respectable Boston mob. Perhaps he then first realized what his fate would surely have been, had he carried out his threat. When one reads the scorching denunciations of this enthusiast, this absolutist in the realm of individual morals, it is hard to accept the fact that Garrison hated the sin and not the sinner, but unless this fact is implicitly taken for granted, his character is sure to be misunderstood. We must believe his own words that he would not "harm a hair of their [the slaveholders'] heads, nor injure them in their lawful property." He was as im-

partial in this matter as any judge on the bench sentencing a criminal not because he is a wretch, but because he has committed a crime.

Although there was not a single subscriber to the *Liberator*, "white or black, south of the Potomac," Gales and Seaton, who had refused the columns of the *National Intelligencer* to a brother editor to defend himself, permitted a correspondent to suggest in this paper that the people of the South "offer an adequate reward to any person who will deliver him [Garrison] dead or alive into the hands of the authorities of any state south of the Potomac"; the proposal, however, seemed to these editors "inexpedient to act upon." In various Southern places measures were taken to prevent the circulation or possession of copies of the *Liberator* or of Walker's "Appeal"—a work which Garrison himself, as we have seen, had not up to this time endorsed.

If Garrison felt no alarm over accumulated threats, certainly his friends did not fail to see the possibility of bodily harm to him, and Arthur Tappan went so far as to send him a letter of credit for one thousand dollars with which to protect himself, —whether by running away, or by employing counsel in case of a suit, the generous donor does not specify. The obvious way to suppress this "madman" was to reach him through the Massachusetts jurisdiction, or through the authority vested in the mayor of Boston; but this official—then Harrison Gray Otis—was able only to assure the petitioners, and in particular Senator Robert Y. Hayne, of the

"insignificant countenance and support which the paper derives from this city."

The South was in no mood to be satisfied with the conservatism, such as Otis's, that saw no real danger and certainly no punishment waiting for an editor who had not put himself outside the pale of established law. If there were no law to catch him in Massachusetts, it was possible to concoct one elsewhere. The governor of Georgia, by the unmilitant name of Lumpkin, approved a bill passed at the end of 1831, offering a reward of five thousand dollars to any person or persons who should cause the arrest and conviction of the editor of the *Liberator*. It was certainly a fat and tempting sum, such as might well have induced a modern spadassin to lure Garrison by any means or forcibly abduct him away from safety. The wonder is that no attempt was made to seize his person.

Garrison thus far had not really warmed up to the occasion; he had renounced colonization, denounced gradual emancipation, and begun to preach immediate abolition, but the seal had not yet been really taken from the vial of his wrath. The Nat Turner insurrection of slaves near Southampton, Va., on August 22, 1831, and the terrible punishments inflicted on the participants in that short-lived menace to the South's "peculiar institution," gave him an opportunity to send forth a blast of denunciation. He laid the blame for this uprising at the door of slavery, and disavowed all responsibility for exciting the passions of the insurrectionists. With a slip of logic unusual for him, he held

that Turner probably never had seen a copy of the *Liberator*, yet took comfort to himself that he "had preached to the slaves the pacific precepts of Jesus Christ." Preaching, without hearers or readers, is not likely to be effectual.

It is to be noticed here that whereas the "infamous" Garrison, as he had now become, never sanctioned or said anything directly to encourage an uprising of slaves against their "masters," Theodore Dwight, a Connecticut lawyer, had said as early as 1794 that "the same law, which justifies the enormities committed by civilized nations when engaged in war, will justify slaves for every necessary act of defense against the wicked and unprovoked outrages committed against their peace, freedom and existence."

The immediate effect, both in the North and the South, of this forceful agitation was to make the negro's lot still harder. What for a long time had been social underrating, now became distinct oppression. The "nigger" was the *casus belli;* his presence in churches, schools, and in all public relations was a continual reminder that, had his skin not been so black, Garrison's talk had not been so disturbing. This increasing ferment of caste seems now most explicable, and incidental to conditions which precede a change of social feeling from a lower to a higher plane. It is, however, surprising to recall that, coincidental with the state of mind following the Turner rebellion, the General Assembly of Virginia listened with calmness and reason to several attempts to bring out in speeches

before that body the seriousness and importance of dealing with the subject of slavery. Nothing came of these rational efforts, but they were characteristic of the Virginia attitude—the recognition by some of her legislators of her occupancy of the middle ground between the extreme South and the extreme North. It was her aforetime Federalism come back to life, though only for a while. It was her ancient sanity and ability once more, though ineffectually, finding expression.

In the first year of his editorship no thought appears to have disturbed Garrison as to the finality of law as a refuge for the oppressed. He urges upon his colored friends, now beginning to rally about his standard and to read his utterances, to abide by the tabernacles of justice and to appeal to established means for redress. Looking forward two decades to his violent denunciations of the Constitution, it seems hardly possible that there ever could have been a William Lloyd Garrison who wrote: "Thanks be to God that we have such a Constitution! Without it, the liberty of every man—white as well as colored—would be in jeopardy. There it stands, firm as the rock of Gibraltar, a high refuge from oppression." He was young, he still retained faith in most of the fixities of civilization and had yet to learn, if he ever did learn, that the basis of all democratic government is compromise. Therefore he still had reason to hope that honest appeals to the human heart and conscience would rouse men from their long sleep of acquiescence in national wrong-doing;

this confidence lent courage to his pen. The great results for which he strove were at last reached by means far different from those he taught, but he seems never to have lost faith in argument, backed by a relentless logic peculiarly his own. What he really did accomplish was largely owing to this perfect trust in his own methods, his own weapons of offense. It is fortunate that he lacked the paralyzing faculty of self-analysis; there was ever before him an open field of battle and only one right side. No devil's advocate tempted him to listen to the merits of the cause of such a foe as slavery. "I am determined," he said at about this time, "to give slaveholders and their apologists as much uneasiness as possible."

If Garrison's cause was beginning to quicken in the loins of time, that of African colonization was by no means dead. Strongly moved by the resentment shown at New Haven toward a plan forming, under stimulation, in part, of Arthur Tappan, for a sort of industrial college for colored students in that academic place, then much frequented by Southerners and Cubans; and still further exasperated by sentiments in Massachusetts favorable to the Colonization Society, he began to open a lively fire against its principles, and to lay the foundations of his "Thoughts on Colonization," a polemic destined to be the most coherent and definite, and perhaps the most effective of all his publications.

In these first issues of the *Liberator* he also assailed free-masonry, capital punishment, imprisonment for debt, the manufacture and sale of

liquors, and the use of tobacco, and advocated the doctrines of peace, as well as the cause of the Cherokee Indians in their fruitless contest with the state of Georgia. Had there been other evils to attack, other good causes to espouse, the editor of this most catholic of sheets would have straddled no line between the wrong and right sides. If he was a fanatic, the field he occupied was not narrow, whatever may have been his judgments. It is absurd to modern ways of thinking to cherish as strong feelings about the use of tobacco as about the question of capital punishment; but this man, possibly in this respect a reflection of his times, did not deal in relative ethical values—he was an extremist in everything. The measure of his prejudices was the measure of the immense evils he assailed—they were concrete facts, and not windmills in the imaginary form of giants, nor was he a soft-hearted, crack-pated ironic Quixote. He was eminently a practical man in method, though an enthusiast in thought and emotion. Reputable and sane men and women—all idealists, and of various walks in life—were, however, beginning to listen to him and read him.

Infuriated by his words, hurled with the precision, and it must be added, the deliberate desire to madden with which the banderillero throws his darts at the tortured bull, the South had begun to show a real frenzy which troubled him "less than the wind." At about this time, according to a remarkable anecdote given in the *Life*, there visited Garrison a man far different from the hot-headed

Southerner—one accustomed to persuade and seduce by the very force and charm of his wonderful personality. But even Aaron Burr, then an old man, could not convince the implacable Garrison that his cause was hopeless and that his struggles were mere folly. Like some malign apparition he appeared in Boston to dissuade the young editor from going on with his paper, and utterly failing in his mission, he vanished, self-poised and mysterious as he ever was through life.

So passed this year, the most important of Garrison's career thus far. A journal of influence had been established which was to maintain its existence, not, however, without hard periods, for thirty-five years, and then to stop by the wise decision of its editor and not from necessity. Real friends had also been made,—friends who did not hesitate to speak their own minds and follow their own courses, not disciples bound to adulation. Garrison was now on the threshold of a new phase of his career, which was to bring him into wider and larger relations with the whole country and make him something more than a crier of a new Boston notion. Already in May of this year (1831) he had sounded a note for the formation of a national anti-slavery society; "such a society," he says, "must be organized forthwith." In June there assembled the first annual convention of the colored people of the United States, but its scope fell far short of what was needed.

Oliver Johnson and the Garrisons have graphically described the formation of the New England

Anti-Slavery Society, the preliminary meeting of which was held on November 13, 1831, in Samuel E. Sewall's office and was attended by fifteen persons. On January 1, 1832, there was adopted, with the exception of the preamble, a constitution drafted by David Lee Child (the husband of Lydia Maria Child), Samuel E. Sewall, William Lloyd Garrison, Ellis Gray Loring, and Oliver Johnson. The following Friday, in the midst of a fierce northeaster, the adjourned meeting for the settlement of the preamble was held in a room beneath the African Baptist Church on the northern side of Beacon Hill. The night and the place, in the very heart of the negro ghetto of Boston, suggest that these adventurous spirits had chosen Darkest Africa as the spot whence they were to flash the first formidable and concentrated light on what seemed to them the greatest darkness, because spiritual, of the country at large. The preamble was passed and signed by twelve who were present, all orthodox in their religious profession, among them Arnold Buffum, the devoted New Bedford Quaker, and a hatter by trade. Child, Loring and Sewall—the only lawyers in the meeting and all of them Unitarians—did not sign, but soon after came into line with the other members of the society. Garrison would have liked a more definite pronunciamento, but had to be content with a declaration of sentiments, the closing part of which was as follows: "While we advance these opinions as the principles on which we intend to act, we declare we will not operate on the existing relations of society by other than

peaceful and lawful means, and that we will give no countenance to violence or insurrection." Garrison's remark as this sturdy little band once more braved the fierce wind of a Boston winter night has been often quoted and may advisedly be repeated. Although it lacks the nervous force of spontaneity, it is characteristic of his usual gravity of expression and fondness for prophetic utterance: "We have met to-night in this obscure schoolhouse; our numbers are few and our influence is limited; but, mark my prediction, Faneuil Hall shall ere long echo with the principles we have set forth. We shall shake the nation by their mighty power."[1] It was a true forecast, but there were other forces rising, other men and women in other places, swiftly marshaling under the banners of professedly irenic measures, to hurry on a movement to which there could be but one issue—fratricidal strife. The war between the states was, in a sense, already begun by these early skirmishers on the borders between the fixed security of organized society and the dark retreats of incipient rebellion.

Garrison, as was fitting, became corresponding secretary of the new society, with Buffum as president and Joshua Coffin as recording secretary. It was the first definite opposition to the American Colonization Society, a short-lived auxiliary of which had been formed in Massachusetts in 1831. About twenty-five per cent. of the seventy-two signers of the constitution were colored. The main object of the society was "to effect the abolition of

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 280.

slavery in the United States," and measures were at once started to disseminate its purposes by means of agents. First the *Liberator* and then the *Abolitionist*, a paper conducted by Alonzo Lewis, Joshua Coffin and Garrison, were the official organs. Well on in the year 1832 began a work which provided Garrison for a time with the semblance of a livelihood. He was made agent of the society for the purpose of "touring" various parts of New England to spread the abolition gospel, at a salary which amounted to a trifle over a dollar a day.

Radical enough by this time on most questions, he was still conservative in a few. As he traveled about on his mission, he was impressed, as men still are, with the favorable results of that artificial arrangement known as the protective system, which he found to be "the life-blood of the nation." In those days it ran somewhat less turbidly than at a later period, and such excesses as it held within itself as a system were not discernible to the young reformer. This was one of his conservatisms. Ultimately he became a free trader on humanitarian grounds. Even to the end of his life he remained a Republican in politics, although the revolt against this party had gained much strength before he died. A curious preference for a few established things and for some of the old paths marks him as more cautious than his extremist contemporary, Wendell Phillips.

In the year 1832, Garrison published his first really important writing, *Thoughts on African Colonization*. Pamphlet though it was, it was a thorough piece of work, deliberately aimed at the impair-

ment of the American Colonization Society. He did not rely, for argument, on rhetoric or his own heated zeal, but on a careful study of the published utterances and records of this society. It was a remarkably incisive examination, fully equal in ability and grasp to what might have been expected from a far more learned and better trained man. It would be no exaggeration to say that there were at that time in the country few college-bred men who could have equaled this effort in acumen, the use of facts, or the assemblage of arguments. Certainly no adequate answer was ever made to this dangerous assault on the Colonization Society, a well recognized institution in American life, cherished by the benevolent and well-meaning, because such a society seemed an easy, if a remote and partial, solution of an evil which was beginning to make the comfortable somewhat uneasy, and the morally half-asleep rub their eyes. Into the merits and demerits of colonization, and of the society, which still has a real if not vigorous existence, it is not necessary to enter here. So great an authority as Daniel Webster said in 1822, in answer to Judge Story's advocacy of colonization, that "it was a scheme of slaveholders to get rid of free negroes."[1] That was not the whole story then or now, but neither the scheme nor the organization was satisfactory to Garrison, and after his wont he proceeded to assail them as inimical to a higher and better plan. His great objection to the society was that it did not attack slavery as a personal sin, but only as a harmful and

[1] Sears, *Wendell Phillips*, p. 32.

regrettable institution, and that it was disposed to let both well enough and the wholly bad alone—the wholly bad being the recognition of slaves as property. With such *laissez-faire* methods he could have nothing to do, although it is noticeable that even he did not propose to extend the suffrage or the burden of office-holding immediately to those who might be released from bondage. Above all things, he announced that the means taken to insure freedom should be moral, by which he meant pacific. From this position he really never wavered. Against this humble David, armed with such pebbles as the truth furnished him, was arrayed the most reputable portion of American society—divines, educators, publicists, men of established position and accustomed to respect. Among these men was Gerrit Smith, soon to feel the smiting fire of this arraignment of his honest convictions.

The pamphlet was deadly and it did its work, just how or in what extent of time it is not possible to determine. As a wound will fester more quickly in unclean than in clean flesh, so did this now well-nigh unreadable pamphlet produce septic conditions in a society about which there was already much uneasiness. Elizur Wright, Jr., enumerates[1] a few of the men who came away from the Colonization Society at about this time. Their names, worthy of mention here, for they were important in those days and later, are as follows.: Arthur and Lewis Tappan, Alvan Stewart, Gerrit Smith, General Samuel Fessenden, Theodore D. Weld, N. P.

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 299.

Rogers, Charles B. Storrs, President of Western Reserve College; Beriah Green, William Goodell, Joshua Leavitt, and Amos A. Phelps. Even such men as Stephen Longfellow, the poet's father, and Simon Greenleaf, the jurist, were favorably moved by the moral weight of Garrison's writing.

In spite of the enlargement of the *Liberator* during the year, there is evidence late in 1832, that the paper was in difficulty, on account of "the embarrassment into which the publication of our *Thoughts* has unavoidably plunged us"; and this, in spite of the fact as stated in the *Life*[1] that it was "owing exclusively to the liberality of Isaac Winslow, of Portland," that Mr. Garrison was able to publish his pamphlet. Notwithstanding his success as a pamphleteer, therefore, the year which had thus far marked the farthest advance seems to have closed rather darkly for the editor.

[1] Vol. I, p. 300 *n.*

CHAPTER IV

THE MOVEMENT MADE NATIONAL

By the time he was twenty-five years old, Garrison had managed to get himself into jail, had been connected with several newspapers and had at last established one that was to endure thirty-five years; he had written a most important and influential pamphlet, had made many telling addresses, and had become mainly responsible for the formation of an anti-slavery society out of which were to grow yet larger things. The leaven he used was beginning to work, and in the end it leavened the whole mass—not, however, without admixture with other quickening elements, the use of which he disdained. Among these were the ballot, political machinery, the social power of the church, and the inherent respect of American citizens for a Constitution of their own making. His greatest contribution to the national life was his discovery, as we may properly call it, of the tremendous force of unremitting personal agitation. It would be fair to call him the first American agitator since the time immediately preceding the Revolution, when the James Otises and the Samuel Adamses stopped discussing only because argument had given way to fighting. But up to the year 1833, Garrison's efforts were fermentative in character, and did not partake of the nature

of explosives. To be sure, he had sorely irritated the South, as even the least salt will irritate an ill condition of the flesh, and he was beginning to displease a considerable number of highly respectable persons in the North, who were coming to regard him as a nuisance if not already a menace. Still his words as yet were only words, however sharp-tipped with irritants for sluggish moral circulation; acts traceable to these exacerbating speeches and editorials there were none as yet of real significance.

But in this year 1833 arose a tempest considerably larger than that teapot of a Connecticut village in which it was brewed. The story must be briefly told, and told only because it was Garrison's advice which really made the whole affair possible. Great movements—and anti-slavery was a great movement—do not originate under one hat, and it is altogether possible that Miss Prudence Crandall, principal of a "female" boarding-school in Canterbury, Conn., would have been aroused by the iniquities of human slavery, had no such person as William Lloyd Garrison ever existed. But the plain truth is that, while comfortably and profitably conducting her girls' school, she was led to read the *Liberator*, copies of which were loaned to her by a colored girl, who "helped" in Miss Crandall's home. Brought up in the Society of Friends, she had early learned that slavery was an evil thing, and her sympathies for a debased race were easily aroused by the exciting pages of Garrison's paper. She took into her school a young colored woman, a friend of the domestic before mentioned, and from

that moment there was no peace for Miss Crandall or her prosperous school. Before she had done with Canterbury, the lady had been insulted in about every conceivable way, short of violence to her person. She was jailed, medical attendance was denied her, ordure was thrown into her well and her house was assaulted and "finally set on fire," [1]—all because she decided, on account of the hubbub over the entrance of the colored girl into the school, to change her establishment into a high school for "young colored ladies and misses." The battle of the whole town against one woman—and incidentally against her inflexible principles—was waged for two years, and at the end of that time the usual thing happened: the idealist was beaten; only her ultimately successful ideals remained. She was to fall a victim to the mass play of cowardice—a boycott.

In the October following his return from Europe in 1833, Garrison went to see Miss Crandall and her curious collection of relics of the warfare,—a warfare as ridiculous as it was offensive, against a woman in the exercise of her personal rights under the Constitution of the country for which these brave warriors professed to care so much. Going on to Brooklyn, Conn., he was served at the house of George Benson, his future father-in-law, with five indictments for libel against as many of the leading persecutors of Miss Crandall's school. These suits were all withdrawn somewhat over a year later, although Garrison had requested to have them continued during the year, and in the *Liberator* had

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 321.

abated none of his violent expressions against the plaintiffs, the chief offender of whom was one Andrew T. Judson. Garrison had practically no part to wage in this strange outbreak in an otherwise decent New England community, which for a time laid aside its garments of respectability and revealed the inextinguishable, naked savage beneath. But the significant thing is that it was he whom Miss Crandall sought for advice about changing (literally) the complexion of her school. What that advice was it is easy to guess; it is also certain that she followed Garrison's counsel and that she advertised her new venture in the *Liberator*.[1] As long as Garrison infuriated a far-distant portion of the country by his words, or empurpled the visages of reputable Bostonians by his harangues, he was harmless enough —as people may have thought; but when his advice, directly given and quickly acted upon, threw a peaceable Northern village into a state of anarchy, it is quite plain—plainer than could have appeared at the time—that Garrison was something more than a loud talker and an indiscreet writer. He was getting to be dynamic—soon he was accounted to be sufficiently dangerous to excite anarchic conditions nearer home than Canterbury, Conn. But he was to see a little of the world and to spread his gospel far afield before this happened.

Notwithstanding the failure to get a footing in New Haven for the industrial college for students of color, talk about a manual labor school was still going on in Philadelphia and Boston. It was felt

[1] See issue for March 2, 1833.

that an active effort to raise money abroad, and particularly in Great Britain, was desirable, and to this end, early in the year 1833, it was voted by the New England Society to send Garrison to England as an agent to collect funds, as soon as means could be provided for the purpose. Not only was he to promote the interests of the Manual Labor School for Colored Youth, but if possible, he was to head off Elliott Cresson, delegated agent of the American Colonization Society, whose propaganda were making a rapid advance not only among English colonizationists, but also among those in favor, theoretically at least, of the abolition of slavery. Cresson had approached William Wilberforce, father of the movement for the emancipation of the British West Indian slaves with indifferent success, but had managed to extract from Thomas Clarkson a statement favoring the emancipation of all slaves in the United States, and the sending of them to Africa as a means of stopping the slave-trade and advancing civilization in that country. This Clarkson manifesto Cresson seems to have so garbled that, as it was sent forth in print, it favored the promotion of "voluntary emigration to Africa of the colored population of the United States," a great distinction and a great difference. Garrison's hands were now seldom empty of wrathful vials which he might pour on the enemies of his cause—enemies in the personal sense he disclaimed ever having had—but for the head of Elliott Cresson, no vial seemed too offensive. Whether Cresson was the hypocritical and unscrupulous person he was said to be by Gar-

rison, and believed to be by the latter's filial biographers, it is impossible to say. But he was making headway in England even against James Cropper and Charles Stuart, who were apparently the most forceful English advocates of the abolition cause; and he was representative of principles which Garrison had come within the past two or three years to abhor. Given a born fighter, a definite opponent, and an objective point toward which both were pressing hard, and we need not inquire too minutely into the refinements of such a controversy. The rules of the ring are not always observed when tongues, not fists, are the weapons. It is not necessary to believe that Cresson was an infamous character to understand why he was assailed by Garrison —he stood squarely in the path of a man who believed that himself and all his works were impeccably on the side of right.

Money came in from New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Providence and other places until over six hundred dollars were subscribed for the trip. It should be remembered that at this period the free colored people were doing their share not only in showing enthusiasm for the cause of their race, but in aiding this cause by gifts of money and by active work. The impression is still strong that the negro himself has been comparatively indifferent to the earlier efforts made for his deliverance from the hardest bondage known to man. That he was for the most part helpless from necessity is true, but, at the time of which we are writing, it is probably also true that the number of morally alert colored

or partly colored persons was creditably large. The saving remnant in any age prepared to suffer personally for the sake of an impersonal or unprofitable cause is always lamentably small, and there is no reason to suppose that the negro, at the dawn of his deliverance in the thirties, was sleeping more soundly at his post than is the wont of common men everywhere and at all times.

Garrison left the *Liberator* to the editorial charge of Oliver Johnson, one of the most uncompromising of the early Abolitionists, who survived his chief and wrote a biography of him necessary to be read by all who would understand the inner life of this movement. It was natural to one of Garrison's temperament that he should make his departure an occasion for speaking his mind fully on the subject closest to his heart. To a gathering of colored people in the little church underneath which was born the New England Society, he said, in dwelling on the power of slavery as a system: "I will not waste my strength in foolishly endeavoring to beat down the great Bastille with a feather. . . . I am for digging under the foundations, and springing a mine that shall not leave one stone upon another." If his methods were to be pacific and non-resistant, certainly he chose his similes and metaphors from the enginery of actual war. It is a mystery how he could have believed that human nature, always impressionable, always yielding at its weakest point, could interpret his ferocious eloquence in terms of an unwarlike policy.

Late in April he addressed an audience in Phila-

delphia, but had occasion to note that "the colored Philadelphians, as a body, do not evince that interest and warmth of attachment which characterize my Boston friends—nor is it to be expected, as I have associated with scarce a dozen of their number." Toward the end of the month Garrison and his friends evidently believed that he was "watched and hunted" with a view to getting bodily possession of him by legal writs, and spiriting him away to Georgia or elsewhere in the South. No evidence is offered to show that these suspicions had any basis of fact to sustain them, but, in order to be sure, he was kept "under lock and key" in an upper room of the house of a friend of Arthur Tappan, until he sailed from New York on May 2, 1833. He went forth to raise fifty thousand dollars for the manual school, to circumvent the activities of the agent Cresson, and, hardest of all, to face social conditions of which he knew absolutely nothing except that, judged by the world's standards, they were very different from those from which he took his being and in which he still moved. Up to that time, traveled Americans—if we except Benjamin Franklin, whose circumstances so much resemble those of Garrison—were for the most part sons of gentlemen, university-bred, and armed with helpful credentials and ample letters of credit. Garrison was singularly devoid of the equipment of an over-sea conqueror in the social or the political arena.

During his brief and well-spent absence, he was a participant as well as a spectator in important hap-

penings. He was able to add to his list of helpful friends the names of James Cropper, Thomas Fowell Buxton, Zachary Macaulay, father of a yet greater son; Samuel Gurney, Charles Stuart, the Rev. Thomas Price, Daniel O'Connell, and George Thompson. In June he was received by William Wilberforce, then within a few weeks of his death, which took place three days after the second reading of the House of Commons Bill emancipating the West Indian slaves. In two interviews with the father of British emancipation, Garrison accomplished all that was necessary to turn the tide against Cresson. A protest signed by Wilberforce within about ten days of his death, and by eleven other leading Abolitionists, called off further aid and comfort on British soil to the American Colonization Society, and it is reasonable to suppose that Garrison's presence in England had much to do with this result. In an unusually sour diatribe against Garrison and his biographers, Leonard Woolsey Bacon, whose hostility has been mentioned elsewhere, makes light of the American agitator's approbation of Buxton, who was Wilberforce's successor in Parliament. Buxton was a brewer, and Garrison had already expressed himself fully in regard to all who manufactured and sold what he believed to be liquid damnation, even though it was as innocent a beverage as the honest ale brewed by Truman, Hanbury, Buxton and Company. Mr. Bacon found evidence of hypocrisy in Garrison's thus meeting in friendly spirit with an English gentleman engaged in a warfare against a common

foe. Many of the charges against Garrison can be shown to be as senseless as this—a large part of them unimportant even when true. That Garrison cannot be accused of a snobbish desire to stand well with important men in England is amply proved by his twice subjecting himself, for the sake of his cause, to a snub from a royal personage whom he unfortunately addressed as "His Grace," the Duke of Sussex. A less ingenuous man than Garrison would have been content with one neglect from a royal highness. Possibly the duke thought, as Buxton did, before he saw his American visitor, that William Lloyd Garrison was a black man.

It soon became evident, on account of the agitation of West Indian affairs, that the time was not ripe to seek English aid for the manual labor school. But Mr. Cresson, already strong in the confidence of many English Quakers, was to be circumvented, if it were a possible thing. He was accordingly invited to a joint debate with Garrison, but found a way to decline it. Garrison therefore addressed a meeting at Price's Wesleyan Chapel, and devoted himself to criticizing the policies of the Colonization Society. Cresson was present, but made no rejoinder, and failed to appear at a meeting held next evening, when Cropper was able to announce Wilberforce's regret that "he was ever led to say anything in approbation of the Colonization Society." This was before Garrison's meeting with Wilberforce, and his chief influence with the latter was in connection with the signing of the "Protest" already referred to. Later, to

induce Cresson to prove his various assertions, Garrison inserted a challenge, for which he paid more than thirty dollars, in the London *Times*. After he had made many new friends, and given publicity and even popularity to the American anti-slavery cause, though attacking with questionable discretion the shortcomings of his native country, he found reason to believe that African colonization had received a serious setback in England, and therefore saw no occasion for longer remaining away from his chosen work at home. It was his good fortune to have Daniel O'Connell give support, with all that great Irishman's eloquence and generous fervor, to his own claim for British sympathy. It was also his privilege to walk as a mourner in the procession which escorted the remains of William Wilberforce to their resting-place in Westminster Abbey. His visit had been eventful and profitable, and it was a good time for departure, when welcome for him and what he stood for was still warm.

This first journey of Garrison to England lasted a few days short of five months; and he was back in New York in season to attend, on October 2d, as a spectator, a meeting called to form the New York City Anti-Slavery Society. Clinton Hall was closed against this meeting, and it was held in the Rev. Charles G. Finney's chapel in Chatham Street, just long enough to adopt a constitution before the incursion of a mob of violent sympathizers with the South, who had auspiciously held a previous meeting in Tammany Hall. When

Garrison returned to Boston, after this experience with the dangers of free speech in New York, he found that news of his strictures on American institutions had preceded his arrival. A crowd, bent on mischief and incited by a "dodger" from the North End, the usual seat of popular inflammation in Boston, as the Bowery was later in New York, gathered, on the evening of October 7th, in front of the office of his paper, but melted away without applying the moral therapeutics dear to mobs. Feeling, however, that some explanation of his utterances was due even to an unreasonable crowd, Garrison, without the vestige of an apologetic line, showed that, while he loved his country and did not fail to praise it, he did not hesitate to brand it "as hypocritical and tyrannical in its treatment of the people of color, whether bond or free."[1] Later he printed in the *Liberator*[2] what he had really said in Exeter Hall, reported at an expense to him of eighty dollars. It was a manly and an unequivocal stand, in which he warned the "enemies of freedom" that he was "storm-proof." In an era which fostered Colonel Diver and Mr. Jefferson Brick, it is not altogether surprising, however disagreeable, to find that Garrison, who was anything but a rowdy, though hardly a pattern "gentleman" of the silver-top variety, felt the need, in his defense, of calling General Webb, of the New York *Courier and Enquirer*, a "cowardly ruffian," and Colonel Stone, of the *Commercial Advertiser*, a "miserable liar and murderous hypo-

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 387. [2] Vol. III, p. 179.

crite" ; but such were the warm journalistic manners of a time when the people of this country were developing into a sharp self-consciousness and a rather loose-tongued way of differing one with another. It was lamentably bad taste, as we now think, but no one can fail to understand the meaning of the oracular editorials of those days. If they were not academic, neither were they Delphic.

In spite of the fact that the second report of the New England Society was able to announce the formation of forty anti-slavery organizations distributed throughout the North, and in spite of the fact that Garrison's name was fast growing at home and in England, the real work done thus far was mostly personal and local. A national society, with its greater possibilities of every sort, was needed. The first call for such an organization was issued on October 20, 1833, by Arthur Tappan, Joshua Leavitt, and Elizur Wright, Jr.—all of that city anti-slavery meeting so stormily born in the Chatham Street chapel in New York only three weeks earlier. On December 4th fifty or sixty delegates, only two or three of whom were colored, assembled in Adelphi Hall, Philadelphia. Many of these delegates were Quakers, and there were also several women (chief among them Lucretia Mott) who took part in the discussions but who were not asked to sign the Declaration of Sentiments, though formally thanked by the male delegates for the interest taken by them in the proceedings. The meetings were guarded by the police, but two members of the Colonization Society, a large

number of Southern medical students[1] and others were made welcome in the spectators' seats. The Rev. Beriah Green, a man of genuine ability and force of character and a professor in Western Reserve College, was chosen president, and Lewis Tappan and John G. Whittier, who had journeyed from Boston with Garrison, were made secretaries. There were present at this convention men afterward of signal importance in the anti-slavery annals, such as Samuel J. May, E. L. Capron, the two Winslows, Nathan and Isaac, from Maine; Arnold Buffum, Thomas Shipley, Joshua Coffin, Amos A. Phelps, William Goodell, Robert Purvis, James M. McKim, and others who well deserve mention.

Thus far, Mr. Garrison, the protagonist of the convention, seems to have played a quiet part, but he was presently appointed on a committee of ten to draw up a declaration of principles. This committee selected a sub-committee, consisting of Garrison, Whittier and May, which was to report the next morning to their associates. This sub-committee entrusted the actual building of the paper to Garrison, their "coryphæus," and, according to Samuel J. May's interesting narrative,[2] left him at ten o'clock at night to find him at eight the next morning just ending his task. It was fitting that this important document, conceived and endorsed in all seriousness by a most earnest body, should have been actually composed in the home of a colored

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 398.
[2] May's *Recollections*, p. 86.

woman, who was a delegate. The whole committee found little to erase or amend, although they decided to omit an attack upon the Colonization Society as conflicting with the directness and integrity of the general text. May admits that the committee "writhed somewhat" under the severity of Garrison's arraignments, but gives him credit for falling in gracefully with the opinions of his associates on the ground that it was their report, not his.

While the convention was waiting for the committee to submit its draft, there took place one of those incidents so dear to the Abolitionist heart, so little in accord with the temper of later days. Various speakers, and especially Lewis Tappan, with overflowing souls, beguiled the hours, in part, by loud praises of Mr. Garrison. Whittier read a poem addressed to his friend, while Tappan, among other extravagances, quoted the words of a clergyman that "a more discreet, humble and faithful Christian" he never had seen. As soon as he found a suitable opportunity, Mr. Garrison, who was by no means devoid of the human fondness for approbation, had the good sense to write that, "the panegyric of our friends is incomparably more afflicting to us than the measureless defamation of our enemies." [1] The merit of this avowal should, however, be somewhat qualified by a recognition of the fact that opposition and detraction seemed to act as a wholesome stimulus to his faculties and his energy.

The declaration, when ready, was debated and

[1] *Liberator*, Vol. III, p. 202.

weighed with all gravity, but the text was accepted with few changes and signed by sixty-three delegates.

Beyond doubt, the men and women who attended this convention felt that they were concerned in framing a paper likely to have as far-reaching consequences as had that other declaration put forth in the same city fifty-seven years earlier. The possible failure of their efforts would not have constituted treason, but there was good reason to anticipate danger and perhaps loss of life in the time to come. The sweet possibilities of martyrdom were ever before the devotees, and they all had a courage never to be questioned—least of all in the framer of the declaration. This now famous manifesto rejected "the use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage," and relied only upon "the opposition of moral purity to moral corruption—the destruction of error by the potency of truth—the overthrow of prejudice by the power of love—and the abolition of slavery by the spirit of repentance." Could they who gave these bravely innocent words life have possibly foreseen that, as years went by, their own vituperation and unchecked passion for abuse would contribute largely to throwing the slaveholding states into a condition of fury, which robbed them of prudence, self-control, foresight as to the probable issue of secession? Had they been able to prophesy the crisis only a generation ahead of these specific utterances, and to foresee the subsequent violence of their attacks, would they have paused in their self-appointed task? Probably not; even

as it was, before long some of them began to have misgivings, and upon these faltering ones Garrison and his immediate followers heaped abuse almost as violent as upon slavery itself.

Naturally the declaration opposed giving compensation to slaveholders who should emancipate their slaves; if any were given, it should go to the slaves and not to their masters—a proposal as logical as it was irritating. The declaration went on shrewdly to concede the right of each sovereign state to "legislate exclusively on the subject of slavery which is tolerated within its limits," but held that Congress had the right "to suppress the domestic slave-trade between the several states and to abolish slavery in those portions of its territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction." It omitted to say, however, in what manner Congress might enforce such restrictive legislation. For those who have a fancy for imaginative history it would be a curious task to portray the working of an interstate commerce act at present in a country where slavery and a powerful moral and physical opposition to it should still co-exist.

Closing with uncompromising threats as to the means to be employed in making the new organization and its publications effective, even to the point of threatening to dispense with the products of slave labor, the declaration's final word was a solemn pledge to do "all that in us lies consistently with this declaration of our principles, to overthrow the most execrable system of slavery that has ever been witnessed upon earth . . . come what may to

our persons, our interests, or our reputations;" it was then signed on December 6, 1833. The Constitution followed, in more formal and less exuberant language, the general affirmations of the declaration. Arthur Tappan, who was not present at the convention, was elected the first president; Elizur Wright, Jr., secretary of domestic correspondence; Garrison, secretary of foreign correspondence; A. L. Cox, recording secretary; and William Green, Jr., treasurer.[1] The foreign secretary soon resigned, probably not without feelings of mortification, because of certain restrictions imposed upon the office. During the thirties he held no important position in the society. This secretaryship later was filled by the Rev. Samuel Hanson Cox, who ultimately forsook the ranks of simon-pure Abolitionism.

The birth of the American Anti-Slavery Society marked the close of the five years since Garrison began to advocate "the gradual emancipation of every slave in the republic" in the Bennington paper established to forward the reëlection of the second Adams. He himself had changed in those five years, and was to change still more radically, but he already saw great accomplishments, not the least of which was the establishment of an anti-slavery literature written with ability and calculated to have its effect. The principal work done was the acting of individuals on other individuals, and there was none of the compulsive force of organization acting on the general mass. The formation of the

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 415.

American Anti-Slavery Society introduced new elements, and tended to nationalize a still compact movement.

On his way to attend the Philadelphia convention, Garrison wrote to his friend George W. Benson of Providence that, among the charms at the home of the latter's father in Brooklyn, Conn., "the soft blue eyes and pleasant countenance of Miss Ellen are by no means impotent or unattractive." Garrison was fond of the society of women; he was perhaps a little sentimental and effusive in their presence and in correspondence with them. He had an attractive and a virile personality, and probably gave as much satisfaction as he took from his many friends of the other sex. In a high-minded and frank way he liked women. There is no occasion here to enlarge upon his brief courtship, or the worldly imprudence of marrying at a time when his fortunes, if such a word can be used, were at lowest ebb. His excuse was the frequent excuse of youth: a pure-minded love, and a willingness to work harder for two than for one. "Matrimony," he wrote to his wife's brother, "instead of hindering, rather advances my labors." It is sufficient to say that early in April, 1833, when Garrison, on his way to England, took leave of his colored friends in the African Church in Providence, Miss Helen Benson, daughter of George and sister of Henry E. and George W. Benson, saw Garrison for the first time. In January of 1834 he definitely began his courtship and on September 4th of this year the wedding took place, the young couple being

married at Miss Benson's home by the Rev. Samuel J. May. The new home was in Roxbury, Mass., then a town separate from Boston, of which it is now a part, and was joyously named "Freedom's Cottage"; here also lived Knapp, Garrison's partner. Miss Benson, cozily called "Peace and Plenty" by her affectionate family, was a very sane and wholesome woman, as was Garrison's own mother, but she had, as was suitable, some rebellious blood in her veins. Her father, who had retired on a moderate competence gained as a merchant in Providence, had been long interested in anti-slavery in its earlier and less definite days. He had been an incorporator of one of the Abolition societies, and at the time of his daughter's marriage was President of the New England Anti-Slavery Society. A remote strain of protest against social oppression came down in the young wife from the Rev. Obadiah Holmes, who had been "publicly whipped in Boston, 1651, for holding service at the bedside of an invalid brother Baptist." [1] Mr. Benson himself, once a Baptist, had joined the Society of Friends, that potent body of religious opposition to slavery in the abstract from earliest days. William Lloyd Garrison might have looked in vain for a sweeter woman or a better helpmate to stand by him in the arduous years to come.

Even before he was thus happily if rashly married, he found himself in straits financially. The *Liberator* had been failing to reach its subscribers with due regularity. The efforts to make a canvass

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 426 *n*.

for subscriptions, on the part of Joshua Coffin, who had more zeal than efficiency, did not succeed in bettering conditions. Garrison was on the point of demanding a fixed salary of one thousand dollars, now made necessary through the changed circumstances of his life. He was even willing to take eight hundred dollars at first, though he could have secured the larger sum by becoming general agent of the new American Anti-Slavery Society. The sum of two thousand dollars was still owing the publishers of the *Liberator* on the first three volumes; the weekly edition numbered two thousand three hundred copies, of which four hundred went to Philadelphia, three hundred to New York, and two hundred to Boston. The exchange list was about one hundred and fifty copies. Three-quarters of the subscribers were colored people and to these mainly Garrison in his paper addressed in capital letters the question, so vital to their race, "Shall the *Liberator* die?" A month following his marriage the *Liberator* went to a new office on Cornhill; and a little later Garrison was making strenuous efforts to lift the burdens of the paper and his own, while his friends were busy devising plans to help him. In the early part of January, 1835, he wrote to George Benson [1] that he "went home to write his valedictory, and to advertise the world of the downfall of the *Liberator*." It had recently been put out at irregular intervals, always a most threatening sign in any periodical publication, and was reeling like a ship about to capsize. In this

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 468.

precarious condition it is necessary to leave the paper for a while, saying only that it continued to exist, if not to thrive, until the editor, after having completed his task, saw fit to end the unbroken series.

Frank as the biographers have been, they do not at this point bring out clearly what seems to have been the fact, that by this time many Abolitionists and anti-slavery advocates were seriously displeased with Garrison's severity of language, both spoken and written, but probably more with the written, because of its enduring sting. His fault lay in applying harsh epithets to individuals, rather than to men and principles in general. The Garrisons have apparently held nothing back, in the way of evidence, as to the growing displeasure even among those still to be accounted friendly ; but they seem not to have admitted that the heavy laboring of the *Liberator* may have been due to a practical manifestation of such displeasure. Even the Rev. Charles Follen, professor at Harvard, whose radicalism finally cost him dear at that institution, favored less unmeasured speech. Lewis Tappan did not relish the criticisms or the occasion for them, while his brother Arthur came within an ace of veering off the narrow path, probably, though not certainly, from an uneasiness lest Garrison's course should have a disintegrating tendency.

One proposal was made by the Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., to curb the wild horses of Mr. Garrison's eloquence, by appointing a few gentlemen who should visé all articles written for the *Liberator*, and

try to persuade the editor to print nothing "which should not have been approved by them." Garrison, of all men, could never have been kept in such traces.

CHAPTER V

A PROVINCIAL MOB

In the midst of these anxieties,—and they were getting to be many for a man still under thirty—a fresh trouble appeared in the shape of George Thompson, "Reverend" as he was sometimes styled. Thompson, who was just six months older than Garrison, had made the latter's acquaintance in England and was well informed on conditions in this country, but significantly had been careful, while on British soil, not to attack our affairs too harshly. John Bright many years later (in 1864) said that he had always "considered Mr. Thompson as the real liberator of the slaves in the English colonies." [1] He was of fine presence and a natural orator, "his action all that Demosthenes could desire," says Garrison effusively. He was the agent of the London Anti-Slavery Society, and by invitation of the two leading anti-slavery societies in this country, he had come to lecture here. He was preceded, however, by Captain Charles Stuart, a half-pay officer retired from the East India service, who had exposed the Colonization Society in England, but who later became most inimical to Garrison. In their friendly years Garrison speaks of Stuart as "solemn, pungent, and severe." To Garrison's

[1] London Farewell Soirée to George Thompson.

ears, Thompson's name was "as sweet as the tones of a flute," but it was not at all dear to the majority of cis-Atlantic ears. His visit was resented as an intrusion, on the part of a "foreigner," in affairs peculiarly our own. John Fiske in his essay on "Andrew Jackson and American Democracy Seventy Years Ago," has well outlined the dawning national sense of self-importance at this period. It seemed to him a wholesome sort of provincialism, but with many crudities, among them "swagger and tall talk." We could barely tolerate Mrs. Trollope and Charles Dickens, the former hostile in spirit, the other friendly, because they indicated our follies in certain and sometimes shrill tones. Our sense of humor managed to save us from mobbing our critics, but we were still too young, too raw, to endure one who should tell us pointedly of our sins. Besides, Mrs. Trollope and Dickens were "literary" and therefore comparatively harmless, but George Thompson was by no means harmless. He was, of a truth, rather a terrible person, and he could not only wound, but rub salt in the raw. Even Garrison was not his superior in this respect.

During the summer there had been some preliminary acts of violence, mainly in New York. The Tappans' private property in that city had been attacked, Miss Crandall's school at Canterbury, Conn., suppressed, and there were other outbreaks in several Northern states. For these events the newspaper press of the day, nearly as offensive as much American journalism is at present and far more blatant, was in no small part responsible.

The era of good feeling of the previous decade had given place to an era of very bad feeling. The pacific Monroe and the respectable second Adams had made way for the violent Jackson, and the thug, not then an object of tender solicitude and sociological observation, was finding himself. A small epidemic of anarchy, not confined to the greater cities, was gathering force. The destruction of the Ursuline Convent in Charlestown, Mass., was nearly met with a counter-attack on Harvard College—all in the interests of religion as looked at by men of limited information and intelligence on two opposite sides. Even the usually cautious Colonization Society came in for a share of the restrictive policy of the populace in regard to free speech, and it is afflicting to read that Garrison did not grieve over the sufferings of his adversaries when, in several places, they were denied an opportunity for meetings. He did, however, have the satisfaction of being told by the Rev. John Breckenridge that he (Garrison) was "too debased and degraded in community for me, occupying the station that I do, to hold a controversy with you."[1] This was meat and drink to Garrison, and his "mind was very tranquil." Nothing in all the annals of the man's career was probably so exasperating to foe, and possibly to friend, as this tranquillity of mind, which ironically held itself above the boiling emotions of those who combated him with tongue and pen, and even, as we shall soon see, with hempen rope. The writer of these words remembers when

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 449.

a boy, having seen the great emancipator at a public meeting in Roxbury, Mass.,—his permanent home from 1864 to his death—seated on the platform, wearing that strange immobile smile of dominance and utter conviction that he was right. Such a smile a judge might wear, as, in discharge of his clear duty, he draws on the black cap.

Thompson, turned out of one New York hotel, made his way to Roxbury, and presently for the time being became Garrison's neighbor. He found ready audiences, and even churches were opened to him. In several towns he was insulted, but in others favorably received. It is not necessary to know or to rehearse the comings and goings of Thompson for some months; his arrival was a menace to Garrison himself, and his stay here did not allay strong feeling already roused among the turbulently inclined. There is nothing vital to record, except the always possible danger of bodily harm, until August, 1835, when there was a meeting of great respectability in Faneuil Hall, Boston, to protest against the growing strength of Abolitionism. Theodore Lyman, Jr., was chairman, and the public-spirited Abbott Lawrence was a vice-president. The resolutions deplored the inimical spirit manifested against the South and censured with "indignation and disgust the intrusion upon our domestic relations of alien emissaries,"[1] thereby signalizing Thompson. Early in September he was mobbed, or nearly so, at Concord, N. H., and the disparity between the name

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 495.

of this place and the treatment he received there produced in Thompson mixed sentiments of indignation and of that abiding humor with which many of the leading Abolitionists were mercifully supplied. Everything was ripening for that outbreak of local fury against the two leaders, known in anti-slavery annals as the Boston mob of 1835, which the Englishman avoided by an honorable and necessary retreat, and out of which Garrison escaped, with his life indeed, but with a new sense of the responsibility assumed when he deliberately fanned the fires of sectional hate.

Before the story is told, however, it is necessary to bring to mind the doings throughout the country during parts of the years 1834 and 1835. In the former year the trustees of Lane Seminary at Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, with the consent of Dr. Lyman Beecher, then president, virtually suppressed all vestige of academic freedom, as we understand the phrase, by prohibiting the existence of any anti-slavery or colonization society within the institution. This action caused the withdrawal of seventy or eighty out of over a hundred students, and particularly of Theodore D. Weld, the "master-spirit," as May calls him, who fought for many years on the skirmish line of radicalism, and long survived his leader Garrison. James Gillespie Birney in the same year gave up his allegiance to the Colonization Society, a significant act on the part of one who had once held slaves. Birney's later career was consistent and aggressive, but was of the Ohio variety of anti-slavery; this differed so much from

the more Eastern activities as to deserve consideration as a separate movement, until the whole North began to fuse in a more general and greater heat than that aroused by any local or personal endeavors, however strenuous they may have been. Three notable accessions to the Garrison side are also to be recorded :—the enthusiastic N. P. Rogers of New Hampshire; the Rev. George Barrell Cheever of Salem; and by no means least, Francis Jackson, a forcible and an earnest character, who a little later sheltered Miss Harriet Martineau from possible assault, in his own house. Like Samuel E. Sewall, Edmund Quincy and Wendell Phillips, Jackson had a social strength to which many of the fiercer sort of Abolitionists could not well pretend.

To vote or not to vote was already a question with Abolitionists. As time went on, adherents of the simon-pure doctrine decided with Garrison that the exertion of moral and not political influence was the only course to follow. The break in the ranks, which were in a general sense unimpaired for several years, came at last over this matter. If both national parties were wrong, or only partly right, how was it possible for those who made no compromises of conscience to help elect men on either side, who, not being for the true cause, were against it? The precise attitude of mind on the part of the Abolitionists is hard to discover. If they would not vote themselves, they had the comforting certainty that others not so fastidious were by slow political pressure strengthening the cause.

Perhaps they perceived with an acumen beyond any particular outward evidence that, if it takes all kinds of people to make a world, it also takes several kinds of ethics to get up enough momentum to speed a worthy purpose. Garrison, as his sons have told,[1] put himself, at this time, into the arena of politics just once, cast a vote, and then withdrew into his own absolutely individualistic courses. He opposed the election of Abbott Lawrence to Congress from the first Massachusetts district, and voted for Amasa Walker, an Abolitionist, notwithstanding the fact that Lawrence was only non-committal, good Whig that he was, and claimed the right to go to Washington, bound by no pledges. Of the democratic necessity for compromise Garrison seems not to have had the faintest comprehension; yet inevitably it came to pass that his own cause was carried safely over many shoals by the larger currents of national activities. It was floated and carried forward by the very medium which he affected most to despise. He, however, was not blind, and predicted that the great question would soon be more than an angry discussion, and that the District of Columbia would be the first strategic point to be gained by one side or the other.

Early in the year 1835, a flank movement was attempted by the colonization sentiment, which was dying, but dying hard. A number of Congregationalist (Trinitarian) clergymen, who did not like the pace at which Garrison was traveling, although he had not as yet made the least break with the

[1] *Life*, Vol. I, p. 455.

formal religion which he still professed, undertook to start the American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race. Its career was as brief as its title was long, but Arthur Tappan was seduced into a temporary interest in the project. His answer to the objections of his friends to this step was shortly after to subscribe five thousand dollars to the American Anti-Slavery Society. The new Union, started to collect statistics on the status of the negro, did not openly seek to antagonize anything from slavery to anti-slavery and the intervening territory of varying opinion. It was not an era, apparently, in which to foster successfully a popular sentiment for carefully collected and digested facts, and therefore by the end of a year and a half the American Union resembled Pliable in *Pilgrim's Progress*, whom Christian "saw no more."

Seeming to triumph over such preliminary efforts to make a diversion against his own methods, Garrison was nevertheless fast approaching a point in his career where the thin oppositions were to become formidable. The church—and by this is meant the whole body of organized religion,—was to be compelled, by force of events, to take sides. While it is perfectly true that from the church are continually issuing men and women who are willing to put off the old man and put on the new,—it is even more true that the church, in and by itself, as a composite whole, is conservative and never leads. If it advances, it moves one foot slowly and with much caution. If the ground bears, it will draw up the other foot, and a new position is then taken, in

a place perhaps already abandoned by the ever-advancing little band of those uncomfortable idealists, called reformers. Now the church was by no means ready to follow William Lloyd Garrison in his wholesale condemnation of those fellow Christians who were unfortunate enough to hold, as under a sort of trust, property in human beings. According to the religious conception of the day, the Saviour of mankind was not abusive or violent, in spite of the incidents of the money-changers and the Pharisees, and it was thought not right that any professed follower of Christ should be condemnatory after a fashion for which his Master had set no precedent. He should the rather make a careful distinction between the things that are Cæsar's and those that are God's. This was reason enough for discovering sad differences between Garrison's methods and Christian practice. It is not necessary at this day to inquire diligently whether the orthodox side brought worldly prudence to its support. Probably it did—certainly it did, according to the extremists. And the fact remains that, according to Christian doctrine as commonly interpreted, Garrison and his followers were brawlers and disturbers of that heavenly peace wherein religious beliefs do most comfortably thrive. As a sequence to the growing opposition to such iconoclasm, various religious bodies began to set their faces against the extension of anti-slavery propagandism as carried on up to about the year 1835. Conferences, Synods, Presbyteries of the several sects began to grow cold toward Garrisonian Aboli-

tionism. Bible and tract societies became suddenly willing, on grounds of expediency, not to preach the Gospel to every creature, if, by so doing, irritation and alarm were to be spread throughout the South, where as yet no schism threatened to divide the two sections of the country, so far as religious organization and cohesion were concerned. The fixity of Garrison's faith, hitherto strong, was beginning to waver, especially when he perceived that his own sect like the others was moved by policy, not conviction. There now begins to appear, in Garrison's opinions, a change toward a rigid formalism in religious matters, which culminated in a final rejection of nearly all the observances once found necessary to his spiritual well-being. With the approach of Thanksgiving Day of this year (1835) he writes to George Benson that he is growing "more and more hostile to outward forms and ceremonies and observances as a religious duty." It was the first indication of an attitude which was to set him at odds with influential opponents of slavery, and ultimately to weaken his position in some important respects.

In midsummer there was held in New York a meeting strongly Southern in complexion, primarily to devise means to head off the now dreaded anti-slavery agitation and the "fanatics" like Garrison and the Tappans, whose effigies were burned in Charleston, S. C., by an infuriated mob, driven to desperation by the discovery of inflammable material sent to that city through the agency of the unceasingly busy American Anti-Slavery

Society. The North was frankly appealed to by several of the slaveholding states to do all in its power to stay this abolition frenzy, and there was put forward the subsequently familiar argument that the settlement of the slave question rested entirely with the states which sustained the burden. To meet the wishes of their Southern friends, the first men of Boston—there is no need of qualifying the truth of this fact—called a meeting for August 21st, in Faneuil Hall, to discountenance the seditious principles of what even John Quincy Adams at that time wrote down as "a small, shallow and enthusiastic party, preaching the abolition of slavery upon the principles of extreme democracy."

The meeting was a Whig affair—its entire respectability was proof of this—but neither Daniel Webster nor Edward Everett was present. The principal speakers were Peleg Sprague and Harrison Gray Otis, both Harvard graduates and both lawyers. They said with great eloquence and fervor the very things which were expected of them, but they did not expostulate against the practical holding back or "retention," by Postmaster-general Kendall, of certain material in the United States mail containing the heated antislavery arguments of the hour. Of the meeting and the manipulation of the mail, the terrible Adams wrote down with his gravest irony, "All this is democracy and the rights of man." Toward Otis, Garrison in the *Liberator* showed a commiserating sternness not unmixed with consideration, but for Peleg Sprague he exhibited no tenderness. He

struck and spared not the orator whom he found "diabolical."

Some days later he was rewarded for his editorial attack on the Faneuil Hall meeting by the erection in front of his Boston home on Brighton Street of a stout gallows, built for the imaginary "working off" of two malefactors, himself and George Thompson. It was an ominous foretaste of what was soon to follow.

On September 26, 1835, Garrison arrived in Boston after a month's absence, only to find what seemed to him a condition of apathy, but what was in reality that slow moving of the waters just before the pot begins to boil. With characteristic unintelligence the public mind had begun slowly to concentrate its wrath on George Thompson, who during the year had been moving about New England, speaking mostly in the churches of denominations liberal minded enough to open their doors. Thompson went also to New York, Philadelphia, Albany and Troy, where he seems to have spoken without rousing hostile feeling. The year saw him twice in Andover, but the theological defenses of that once potent citadel of orthodoxy were successfully prepared to sustain a long siege. A little past the middle of the summer opinion began to rise against him, his lectures were disturbed and broken up, and stones were thrown. His doctrines were offensive, but the fact that he was a "foreigner" seems to have been equally serious, when he failed silently to assimilate with established American policies. The South at this time was waxing still warmer

against Garrison, Arthur Tappan, and chiefly against Thompson. Throwing stones satisfied the unrest of the North, but the South, with its usual candor, wanted the heads of these incendiary fanatics. With threats of a boycott—the word did not then exist—of Northern trade, there arose the suggestion of sending the Abolitionists to Coventry and keeping them there. The North as yet had not developed its conscience to the point reached by the colonists before the Revolution, when it was prepared to languish commercially for the sake of a principle, and so naturally was fain to turn upon the troublesome radicals and—let them alone. The Abolitionists in Boston, who at this time seemed not especially inclined to foment strife by any exciting conduct on their own part, gave public notice of a meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, to be held on October 14th, to which women only were invited, and which Mr. Thompson was to address. Immediately there arose a civic restlessness; the *Commercial Gazette* of Boston took upon itself the prediction of trouble at this meeting, not "from a rabble, but from men of property and standing," a phrase which was destined to live in the annals of this, the least creditable of the many events in Boston's vivid history. It became advisable, and indeed necessary, to postpone the date to October 21st and to change the place of meeting to a hall at 46 Washington Street, the headquarters of the anti-slavery office, in a building yet in existence. The name of Mr. Thompson was dropped from the program, and the

day before the announced meeting he left Boston, and, as it soon proved, the country. The plotters of trouble, however, believed that he was still in town, and at about this time, and perhaps on the eventful day itself, "Thirty Truckmen" gave warning that the *Liberator* must cease publication, else its editor would receive a coat of tar and feathers—that most senseless of all forms of public disapproval, but highly in favor at all times among the dull-witted.

Only a few hours before the outrage took place, there flamed forth about the town a most incendiary handbill, directed against Thompson, urging "friends of the Union" to snake him out, and offering a liberal reward to the first individual who should be the means of bringing him to the tar-kettle. This precious instrument was projected by two Central Wharf merchants and written by James L. Homer, a large portion of the edition finding its way into the hands of North End mechanics, an element most likely to appreciate the opportunity offered. The body of the plan was doubtless to prevent the holding of the meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society—a society which, as Mr. Homer admitted, was not endorsed by thoughtful minds of that day in the North End of Boston.

The handbills did their work quickly, and by the time that Garrison arrived at the hall, at twenty minutes before three in the afternoon, a crowd had already assembled in the street, and eventually swelled to between two and five thousand people. About a score of women were in the hall, one of

whom was the indomitable and able Maria Weston Chapman, many years later the biographer of Harriet Martineau. A press of more or less disorderly and menacing men began to throng about the stairway and the door. In accordance with the wishes of the president of the society, Miss Mary S. Parker, Garrison decided to leave the meeting, and with Charles C. Burleigh, went into the office of the Anti-Slavery Society, where he began to write to a friend an account of the events actually happening about him. General Theodore Lyman, Jr., then mayor of Boston, soon arrived, to find an increasing mob, becoming more and more excited by their own cries for Thompson. He failed in his first tactics by urging instead of ordering the riotous throng to disperse. Meanwhile the women, with the calmness of seraphs, began to hold their meeting, showing that desperate courage of which their sex seems peculiarly capable. Deaf to the persuasions of the mayor, the crowd, possibly awed or ashamed by the persistent valor of the meeting, directed its attention to the office door, but Burleigh turned the lock and for a moment Garrison was safe. Under orders from the mayor, who was finding it equally difficult to persuade women perfectly willing to die and men ready for killing, the meeting adjourned to Mrs. Chapman's house on West Street, going first, however, to Francis Jackson's home on Hollis Street.

Since Thompson was not to be found, and the women had retired, it was evident that the mob must turn its attention to something definite. Accordingly, with the mayor's assent, the sign of the

Anti-Slavery Society was torn off and thrown into the street to be instantly smashed. But feeding the appetite of a mob is a futile means of appeasing it. The quarry was raw human flesh and not a deal board. As the cry for "Garrison" increased in violence, and as the danger of bodily harm grew more imminent, the strange young man found time, in a moment of extreme peril, to admonish a friendly supporter not to relinquish the principle of non-resistance by urging force even to save life. Persuaded by his friends, by the exigency of the situation, and at last by his own common sense, Garrison dropped from the rear of the building, and tried to enter Wilson's Lane, now Devonshire Street, but was there blocked by the mob. Retreating upstairs, though ready to surrender himself, he was hidden under some boards, where the advance guard of skirmishers soon discovered him. Voluntarily descending a ladder to the ground, Garrison was then led, if not dragged, to State Street and back of the City Hall, which, since the town of Boston became a city in 1822, had occupied the second story of the Old State House at the head of State Street. He was hatless, a rope was about his body, and his clothing was partially torn from him. With Josiah Quincy, Jr., then president of the Common Council, at or near his side, Garrison was brought, by the excellent manœuvres of Mayor Lyman and some constables, inside the south door of the City Hall which was then immediately shut against the crowd, whose disposition seems to have been to rush their victim to the Frog Pond on Bos-

ton Common, and later to apply that last degradation—a coat of tar and feathers. After Garrison had been carried to the mayor's office, the mayor appealed to the intelligence of the mob in the name of law and civil order. No spot in the civilized town of Boston seemed so safe a refuge for an innocent man in such an emergency as the common jail. Accordingly, papers were made out in due form, committing Garrison as a "rioter," and after he had been provided with various portions of raiment from different well-wishers to replace the new suit of clothes destroyed by his fellow citizens, he was smuggled out of the north door. By this time Garrison was in an ecstatic frame of mind, feeling that it was a "blessed privilege thus to suffer in the cause of Christ." The hack into which he was hurried, though assailed with great but futile violence, made its way through the hustling mass of senseless fury to the "new and last refuge of liberty and life," the jail in Leverett Street. Locked in a cell with "two delightful associates, a good conscience and a cheerful mind," John Bunyan himself could not have been happier than our malefactor. The next morning he was free to leave the jail, but by request and from motives of public policy, he departed the city and went with his wife to Brooklyn, Conn., the home of the Bensons.

It was the first momentous crisis of Garrison's career, in which were to occur many episodes terrifying to a spirit less intrepid. He faced the ordeal with great courage, and no charge lies against him for trying to escape when advised by Mayor Lyman

so to do. After the event, however, his was not the dumbness of the sheep before its shearer, and both he and his friends had much to say of the mayor's failure to use the full majesty and power of his office to forestall and quell civic violence. Since his life—granting it to have been in danger—was undoubtedly saved by the resourcefulness of Mr. Lyman, the charge of ingratitude has been brought against Garrison. The controversy is an interminable one, and the facts can be interpreted according to the sympathies of each side. No serious harm was done after all, but out of this really discreditable event was born one phrase likely to remain in Boston's annals. The Abolitionists lost no opportunity to ring changes on the characterization of the mob as composed of "gentlemen of property and standing." Even President Wayland of Brown University assured Miss Martineau that it was "all right—the mob having been composed entirely of gentlemen." What was meant seriously as extenuation was immediately and forever after turned into laughter by the ceaseless iteration of the unfortunate phrase.

It may well be doubted whether the true mob was not made up of such lively fellows—not necessarily of the baser, but certainly of the humbler sort—as longshoremen, truckmen, "North Enders," and, in short, many of the kind which is usually on hand at a fire, or a street fight, and which quickly resolves itself into a mob. It was a rough and ready sort, little understood now when the population of every large city has a really dangerous class, and was most

forcibly personified by the Bowery Boys of New York, from whom later were recruited many of the famous Zouaves of the Civil War.

In Garrison's enforced absence, Knapp was ordered to quit the office where the *Liberator* was published. The landlord of Garrison's house, fearing an attack upon it, wished his tenant to remove himself and his belongings. At this crisis, Samuel E. Sewall, one of the gentlest yet one of the firmest of the Abolitionists, offered to aid as far as possible in the continuance of the *Liberator*, which for some time, as has been seen, had been in a poor way, and which naturally was now subject to every sort of financial pressure.

At such a juncture, the leading character was eager to be back on the stage, and he informed his partner that he would soon be home, not wishing the charge to be made that he had "been driven out of Boston, and dare not return." At the same time he asks playfully whether his lost hat has yet been found. On November 4th, about two weeks after the mobbing, Garrison came back, staying with friends, and only visiting his own house. The circulation of the paper began to gain a little, and there were sent in occasional small sums to quicken the cause.

Early in November Garrison saw, as he supposed, the last of George Thompson, who managed to get safely and secretly on board a packet bound for St. John, whence he was to sail for England.

The extrusion of Thompson from the United States proved to be a powerful aid to the move-

ment, and could Garrison have foreseen this, he perhaps would not have grieved so much, or have expressed himself so mournfully. It gave the English Abolitionist a basis of practical knowledge and a story of personal experience on which to build up in his own country a yet stronger sentiment against American slavery. It would probably have been to the advantage of the pro-slavery advocates to dispose, by fair means or foul, of this formidable foe to their security. As already suggested, it was characteristic of a new country sorely to feel the strictures of a foreigner, especially an Englishman, and the most was doubtless made of this resentment, particularly in the South, and by the cautious spirits of the North. This objection to free speech in a visiting foreigner has largely passed away, in fact hardly even exists except when fanned to a blaze by a newspaper report, generally incorrect, of some visitor's "views" on this country. Thompson and Dickens, who also abominated black slavery here, as he hated caste slavery in England, were definite critics and specified their opposition to conditions which they found; but so far have we advanced in toleration of other men's corrections, that even twenty years ago we were only amused at the small and sour strictures on our civilization expressed in *The Great Republic*, by Sir Lepel Griffin.

In later years we were to be more fairly treated by James Bryce; and yet to those who think at all about these matters, both Thompson and Bryce had merely the Englishman's habit of telling the truth as he sees it. However all this may be, Thompson

was quite guiltless of discretion or tact, and the treatment he received might fairly have been expected from a people still parochially minded in regard to foreigners and all their ways. It was just as indiscreet for him to talk as he thought in superheated Boston, as it was fifty years later for Lord Frederick Cavendish to go to walk in Phœnix Park, and it would have been no great wonder had the former shared the fate of the latter. Garrison, as a matter of course, had to take on his own shoulders the abuse intended for his English colleague, and it is no discredit to him that he felt the joys as well as the sorrows of martyrdom. The greater the abuse the more vividly was the question to which he had consecrated his life kept before the public mind. The policy of such radicalism as his has always been to irritate the sensibilities of opponents, as cowhage maddens the epidermis. He went far in verbal torture of his victims, some of whom, as we now must think, were honorable and right-minded men; but he did not often go to such extremes as Wendell Phillips, whose power to rasp seems at times to have been inordinate, and who lacked the serener moral grandeur of Garrison.

CHAPTER VI

A RIFT WITHIN THE ABOLITION LUTE

By December, 1835, Garrison had read William Ellery Channing's *Essay on Slavery*, which he found "an inflated, inconsistent and slanderous production." It was not in accord with the Abolitionist character to welcome such a book—the earnest work of an absolutely sincere, if emotionally cold man who had gone as far as he could in a radical direction without parting with his sense of fairness and discrimination. The Rev. Amos A. Phelps was for belaboring all "go-betweenities" of this kind. "Every such man who comes out should be reviewed without respect of his person, and when he is naked let his nakedness be made visible." Demanding complete surrender on the part of all who differed or even varied from the impeccable faith, it was natural that Garrison himself should find that the "sole excellencies" of the *Essay* were "its moral plagiarisms from the writings of Abolitionists." He pressed with unusual severity his hard doctrine of implicit allegiance when he chose to decry this book by the serene Channing, who had been impelled to his task by reading Mrs. Lydia Maria Child's *Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, as able in argument as uninviting in truth, and one of the most

significant of the earlier propagandist utterances. Every convert, every one who so much as wavered from the right side, must, in Garrison's rigid doctrines, come under a sort of moral harrow, until he was rid of every suspicion of heresy. Channing was mentally, morally, spiritually, physically incapable of extremism; and, it must be admitted, that there certainly were passages and arguments in his book far too conciliatory toward that common adversary of all humanitarianism—the slaveholder. Even John Quincy Adams speaks of several chapters as having "a very Jesuitical complexion."

Within a few months after Garrison's refusal to welcome Channing as one whose face was turned toward the morning, they met at a hearing of the committee appointed by the Massachusetts legislature to look into the requests of various Southern states that efforts be made to repress the Abolitionists. These requests meant nothing less than an attack on freedom of speech and of the press and called forth, at the State House, an attendance of persons not otherwise in complete accord. The two men shook hands, although Dr. Channing was not wholly sure that it was Garrison whom he was meeting. But the incident prompted the often-quoted remark made by Mrs. Maria Weston Chapman that "Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other." The following Sunday Garrison went to hear Channing preach and found his sermon "full of beauty and power." It was probably on this occasion that he occupied a pew belonging to the uncle of that fine but most

resolute New England radical—Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson. He was notified indirectly the next day that the hospitality of the pew could be his no longer. Thus began and soon terminated the personal relations between Garrison and Channing.

Miss Harriet Martineau, whose Abolitionism cannot be impeached, reveals in her *Autobiography* a Dr. Channing, staunch in his friendliness and courtesy to her at this time, even after she had had the audacity to attend and speak at a meeting held in the house of Francis Jackson. Such an act on the part of one who, like Thompson, was a "foreigner," put this able and energetic woman on record, and she had to pay the full social penalty for her temerity, but Channing was loyal throughout. It is impossible now to withhold the judgment that on such occasions there were committed firmly to the Abolition cause minds more open to charitable sentiments than that of the leader, and that Miss Martineau was one of them. The fiery zeal of the enthusiast must be the excuse for his occasionally intolerant spirit.

Among the speakers at the legislative hearing was the Rev. Dr. Charles Follen, who by this time had lost, through non-renewal, his professorship of the German Language and Literature at Harvard College, on account of his humanitarian practices.[1]

[1] Follen, friend of Körner, the poet of German patriotism, had been proscribed for his liberal opinions at the University of Jena and compelled for the same reason to give up his professorship of civil law at Basle. He came to America in 1824. After his withdrawal from Harvard, he went to a Unitarian

Using the same freedom of speech that he went to the hearing to defend, Follen was interrupted by the chairman, George Lunt, who is remembered, if remembered at all aside from his uncommon literary merits, as a notable "Hunker" of those days. Others not identified with Abolitionists were found to protest strongly at any proposed gag against free speech, and finally, after several stormy hearings, the committee submitted a report, which was more full of disapproval than denunciation of the anti-slavery excitement, and was not adopted. The lines in Massachusetts were not yet drawn sharply enough to make an open attack on her ancient prerogatives successful. Mr. Garrison, often a good tactician, did not on this occasion thrust himself too much to the front, but in his closing remarks he used the forceful argument that he really had no country; that he was "excluded by a bloody proscription from one-half of the national territory"; and that in effect the Union was even then "virtually dissolved."

Meanwhile there had arisen thus early in the history of this rapidly advancing crusade a proposal, hitherto mentioned, which was encouraged by President Jackson in his message of December, 1835. This was nothing less than a movement to prevent the use of the national postal service for the pur-

pastorate in New York City, which he held for two years when he again suffered for his principles through a severance of his relations with this congregation. He perished, with many others, by the burning of the steamer *Lexington* on January 13, 1840. Every Unitarian church in Boston refused the use of its edifice for holding services in honor of Dr. Follen.

pose of sending printed material hostile to the institution of slavery to those portions of the country where the institution flourished. It is most difficult for minds fully accustomed to the conception of this government as a concrete, definite, and inseparate whole, to understand how such a proposal could ever have been put forth by the Chief Executive or have found favor with any considerable part of the citizens. Yet the South was unanimous in its desire to pass measures, which at their face value were unconstitutional ; it failed only in fixing on a concrete plan. In the North, though opinions were far more divided, it is doubtful if the constitutional objections were a whit more seriously felt than by the Southerners. Democracy was still a highly individualized sentiment, and expressed itself in exaggerated modes of personal freedom. It was far from that stage of development when it, as well as nobility, was felt to have its obligations. Therefore the suggestions, now seemingly preposterous, to exclude matter not treasonable, obscene, or dishonest, from the mail, were not frowned upon as subversive of the common rights of a free people.

It was necessary to fall back on the right of each state to determine upon its internal affairs, with its implied power to exclude whatever was prejudicial to its welfare. The South was not obliged to be inconsistent with itself in taking this attitude, but the North was of many executive and legislative minds in its attempts to assist the South in repressing the growth of Abolitionism. The spirit of the North may have been willing to aid its anxious Southern

brethren in protecting their established customs, but the flesh at this time evidently recoiled from taking an attitude which could not have been maintained. In spite of the frowning hostility of the "religious corporations"—to use Miss Martineau's cold epithet—and of many higher institutions of learning, the despised Nazarenes were growing—"at the rate of nearly one new society a day." [1] The country as a whole was concerning itself with affairs which seemed to be of far greater moment—among them the beginning of the agitations to be ended by the annexation of Texas to bastion the pro-slavery edifice; while the anti-slavery enthusiasts, still few but hopefully gaining in numbers, fought as skirmishers over matters which seemed of relatively small importance, but which had the quality to annoy. Their strongest strategic move, at present as for some time past, was the continuous introduction of petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. It was fortunate for these Abolitionists that their contention that the District should be rid of its shameful burden had a semblance of reason, even in the minds of those indifferent to larger aspects.

The late Professor Sumner, in his recent work on *Folkways*,[2] holds with his usual force that moral enthusiasm such as that displayed for thirty years before the outbreak of strife does not determine or occasion great political alterations. "The humanitarians of the nineteenth century," says Professor Sumner, "did not settle anything. . . . The in-

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 79.

[2] *Folkways*, pp. 306, 307.

terests normally control life. It is not right [why does he say 'right'?] that ethical generalizations should get dogmatic authority and be made the rule of life." However interesting, academically, such a thesis will always be, there is still some reason to believe that the Abolitionists have always supposed that they did effect something and that they were animated by moral forces, and none more so than Garrison. The anti-slavery people of every shade and variation at least had convictions. A fire, once kindled, does not readily stay in one spot, and so it soon fell out that even politicians felt the heat and then the blaze of this consuming problem. Some few were favorably warmed by it and began to come under conviction, but the time was not yet ripe for politicians to be affected except by the usual motives of expediency. Several parties were to be born only to die before the cause became so strong that it could say to men in public life that they must definitely declare their opinions or prepare to meet the fate of the indecisive. For the present a regardful timidity kept the doubtful or the indifferent on good terms with the South. It was not yet necessary for them to cringe. Still it can be fairly said that slavery by this time was morally abhorrent to such men as Edward Everett, however cautious their words and actions.

During a large part of the year 1836 Garrison was away from Boston, although the editorial work on the *Liberator* went on, even if not with the customary regularity. He was far from well and still suffered from the strain put upon him nervously by

his recent exciting experiences. He loosed his hold on the editorial reins but did not let them drop. Knapp in 1835 had become the sole publisher and the partnership was dissolved, Charles Burleigh filling as well as he could Garrison's place. Early in the new year we find the absent editor urging that "the debates in Congress upon the petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia" be given the first place and that "all *official* documents in opposition to our cause" be published *instanter*.[1] This was the instinct of a good journalist, yet it shows that the writer, while professing to take no part in political strife, was not slow to profit by the importance of it to his cause.

Garrison's ill health was reflected in his letters, which at times are exceptionally bitter. Of the people of Boston, when the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, successor to the New England Society, had just met with sixteen refusals of halls or churches in which to hold its annual meeting, he says, "They are liars and the truth is not in them." In spite of his denunciation of the "Nero McDuffie" and the "Domitian Marcy," he thinks that "we ought to be more tender of the South," in view of the conduct of this "hypocritical and callous-hearted city."

The cause this year received from Gerrit Smith, who had left the Colonization and joined the Abolition movement, a gift of one thousand dollars, but the benefaction did not prevent Garrison from finding something disingenuous in the convert's manner

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 85.

of leaving his early faith. Smith, with his usual broad temper, did not take such rebuffs hardly. He even referred lightly to his master as having "boxed his ears," nor did he at that time restrain his hand from helping out the finances of the *Liberator*. There were Abolitionists more denunciatory and reckless of speech than their leader and certainly, according to the standard of the age, some of them were held to be more blasphemous; but none had a greater gift for being thoroughly irritating when principle was at stake. Telling the exact truth as regards Laodicean friend or bitter foe, was more than a passion with Garrison: it was almost a frenzy; no less so when his utterances were made with great calmness and measured calculation. The small-minded were naturally the more embittered—while the larger spirits, such as Gerrit Smith and Dr. Channing, bore Garrison's censures with fine magnanimity. It seems probable that, in spite of his bold speech, Garrison's cause throve at times, because of the balanced character of some who were not so ready to follow as to listen and digest. His determination to thresh out every particle of chaff and leave only the pure grain, and to allow no man or woman to be an ally without implicit acceptance of every tenet, savored more of military than of political method. In no case did Garrison apply his policy—if anything so devoid of tact or compromise can be called policy—with more hardihood than in the attitude he took toward Dr. Channing's book.

Although Garrison visited Boston to appear be-

fore the previously mentioned joint committee (known as the Lunt Committee) of the Massachusetts legislature, he did not actually take up his residence again in Boston until September, 1836. Earlier in this year he had interested himself in attacking Dr. Lyman Beecher's recent plea for a better preservation of the Sabbath. "His [Garrison's] central idea had been to rebuke Dr. Beecher for being so strenuous in behalf of the fourth commandment, while giving his protecting influence to slavery, which annihilated the whole decalogue, and excluded two and a half millions of his countrymen from all the benefits of the Sabbath."[1] Here is found the early blossoming of a new reform on his already fecund radicalism. While meaning to assail Beecher's heterodoxy on the anti-slavery question, he commits himself to the utterance that he is not in favor of imposing punishment for violations of a formal keeping of the Sabbath, or of enforcing its observance. Stiff opposition to such a latitudinarian view was not slow in coming. Small as any personal view on this matter seems to-day, it was one of the several factors which, rapidly grafting themselves on Garrison's body of ideas, universal reformer as he really was, were very soon to make trouble for him and to force a schism in the one cause to which his life was most devoted. A losing cause had no terrors for Garrison and although he recognized that his lax Sabbatical views were soon to cost the *Liberator* many subscribers, he found occasion to say to a

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 108.

friend: "I am forced to believe that, as it respects the greater portion of professing Christians in the land, Christ has died in vain." Surely less than ten years of active humanitarian service had mightily changed the rather priggish young Newburyport printer, full of religion and sometimes cant, into a fighter of shams, robust enough to have suited even Thomas Carlyle, the American edition of whose *Sartor Resartus*, by the way, appeared at this very time.

In the fall of this year, 1836, he was present at an important meeting in New York of some thirty of the seventy agents employed to spread the propaganda—among them Theodore D. Weld, Charles Stuart, assailant in England of the American Colonization Society, and Rev. Beriah Green. Weld had left Lane Seminary for conscience' sake, and become one of Garrison's closest followers, differing only from him, as did Whittier, in an expressed wish not to intrude the woman question into the more immediate problem.

At the close of this year Garrison submitted himself incognito to a phrenological examination at the hands of one of the then famous Fowlers. With characteristic boldness the Garrisons have published the results of this survey of their father's mental and moral state. Some of the details are curious and perhaps valuable, for Garrison's peculiarities must be fairly considered in a general estimate of him as a man of genius. According to the test he was secretive, obstinate and of large self-esteem. "His mind always expands on sub-

jects the longer he dwells on them—the more he says, the more he has to say." "He always wants the reins in his own hands." "He never compromises to secure the approbation of others, but acts totally regardless of what others may think or say." A multitude of other qualities, in the main strong and good, were disclosed, but the weaknesses of his vital make-up were also brought out in a somewhat astonishing way. It is difficult, however, to believe that Fowler had no previous knowledge of his sitter.

Early in the year the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society assumed the burden of the *Liberator*, the condition of which was still languishing. The enthusiasm of local Abolitionists was called upon to sustain the society's determination to edit and print a paper in no sense its official organ. In March the *Liberator* was enlarged to meet the pressure of constantly increasing anti-slavery news, and "by mid-summer the subscribers numbered some three thousand." It is difficult to conceive a loftier ideal than that set by Garrison for the conduct of his paper. He insisted upon free discussion from all sides in its pages. He would not in any way come under the control of the friendly society which assumed a burden he could not carry, and he was unwilling to conflict with the larger endeavors of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

A word must be said here of the once famous "Refuge of Oppression," a department of the *Liberator*, called in the first volume the "Slavery Record," and into which Garrison ironically

dumped about everything he could find hostile to his cause, "some of the choicest specimens of anti-Abolition morality, decency, logic and humanity—generally without note or comment." It was a telling example of his strong journalistic keenness and his humorous facility for turning the tables on his opponents by a show of fair-mindedness to which they could present not the slightest objection without raising a laugh against themselves. The Rev. Samuel Osgood, of Springfield, Mass., who was conservative on the Sabbath question, but a good anti-slavery man withal, once playfully said, when he ventured to make some slight opposition, that he was in "hourly expectation of being put into the 'Refuge of Oppression.'" It proved to be a veritable pit for Garrison's enemies, but it was of their own digging.

In the spring both branches of the Massachusetts legislature adopted resolutions in favor of the right of petition,—a right just denied, on January, 1837, by the national House of Representatives. This step gave Garrison the keenest satisfaction, for he was never averse to political action which helped his cause, although during this very year, at the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he submitted a resolution to the effect, in part, that Abolitionists ought not to attach themselves as such to any party.

A powerful ally and friend, who was to be continuously faithful to Garrison and Garrisonianism, now first appeared on the scene in the person of Wendell Phillips, a six years' graduate of Harvard

College, a lawyer by profession, the son of Boston's first mayor, and endowed with many graces, personal and social. So completely did he represent the Boston type of cultivated gentlemen of the period that it seems hardly possible to exclude him from the respectable yet agitated group which less than a year and a half before this had participated in or did nothing to quell the October mob eager for Garrison's life or suppression. There can be no doubt about the courage displayed by this young Phillips, who was representative of all that was reputable in Boston and cultivated and elegant in Harvard College, when he crossed his social Rubicon, insignificant as that stream may appear in comparison with the totality of things. Something must be said a little farther on of him and of his break with the traditions that hold most men fast. Just now the feeling in Boston was so strongly against this disturbing radicalism that this very year when Phillips first "came out," no meeting-house could be secured for the annual gathering of the Massachusetts Society and only three were open to the New England Anti-Slavery Convention. Even halls for public use of sufficient size were closed, although, as Garrison said with his usual sting, there was no public hall which could not "be occupied by jugglers, mountebanks, ballad-singers, rope-dancers, religious impostors, etc., etc., as they shall wish to hire."

For the sake of his family, Garrison went to Brooklyn, Conn., in June for some weeks, leaving Oliver Johnson as acting editor, but returned about

the first of September. Meanwhile the beginnings of a serious crisis had arisen in the anti-slavery ranks, from which ultimately a schism resulted.

Brooks Adams in his unsparing attack on the early hierarchy—"The Emancipation of Massachusetts"—has shown that the clergy bitterly fought all encroachments against their power. That this attitude of self-defense, not to say spiritual arrogance, was by no means dead in the late thirties of the nineteenth century on the same battle-ground where the Mathers had waged fierce warfare a century and a half earlier, appears plainly enough in the fairly well concerted opposition which now arose against the extreme left of the Abolitionist movement. Manners were gentler, no doubt, and perhaps more sly. But the determination to maintain an unbroken front was then as strong as ever.

Without entering minutely into the causes of this attempted and finally successful disruption of the several elements of Abolitionism, it is enough to say that the trouble mainly began with the forging of a rather mild thunderbolt by the hand of the Rev. Nehemiah Adams, more celebrated nearly twenty years later for his once famous "South-side View of Slavery," which may now be rated as one of the "humors of the campaign" then raging. In a pastoral letter written by him but issued by the General Association of Massachusetts, he sought in gentlest manner to preserve the Orthodox Congregational pulpit intact from the disturbing questions of the day so likely to impair the direct object of the ministry, the inculcation of personal religion.

But Mr. Adams went further and touched upon a question which generally creates trouble whenever it is set going. Starting with a large and vapid theorem that "the power of woman is in her dependence," he proceeded rapidly to reprove them who "countenance any of that sex who so far forget themselves as to itinerate in the character of public lecturers and teachers." Trouble in this world has often centred about a woman. In this instance, two women, the Misses Sarah and Angelina Grimké, were the immediate cause of the good Mr. Adams's alarm, although he did not even pay them the small distinction of admitting their existence in his strictures. Both were born in Charleston, S. C., and had known and learned to hate slavery at first hand. They were of the Society of Friends, and must be accounted among the staunchest of Garrison's adherents. The influence of their connection with the earliest movements of the woman suffrage cause in this country can hardly be overestimated. Contrary to all Pauline injunctions, they began, as young women, to speak in Abolition meetings, and the pastoral letter is sufficient evidence that the impression made by them on the public was growing too strong to suit a conservative ecclesiastical taste. It was Sarah Grimké who had recently declared that "although brought up in the midst of slavery, and having converse with hundreds of well-treated slaves, she has never found one who did not wish to be free." [1] Late in the year 1836, the sisters had addressed the convention of

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 117.

anti-slavery delegates held in New York, and by the middle of the next year were speaking in churches and elsewhere in Massachusetts. Miss Angelina Grimké had also answered Catherine Beecher by a letter, first printed in the *Liberator* and later in a pamphlet, which the brothers Garrison assert positively to have been the "beginning of the woman's rights agitation in America." [1] It was indeed time that something pastoral was done, for Sarah Grimké claimed, not as a Quakeress, but as a woman, the right to preach.

A few weeks later five Massachusetts ministers of the Gospel sent the first shot across Garrison's bow, by issuing an "Appeal of Clerical Abolitionists," better known as the "Clerical Appeal," in which, during the absence of its editor, they laid bare the shortcomings of the *Liberator*, asserting that its excessive language and imperious demands, and the diversion of contributions from religious objects into anti-slavery channels, were the means of preventing "many worthy men from appearing in favor of immediate emancipation." Oliver Johnson, as acting editor, was brisk to reply ; the Rev. Amos A. Phelps, general agent for the Massachusetts Society, took up the cudgels, and so did Garrison from Brooklyn, in defense of Johnson, who was the definite person attacked, and in defiance of the "sanctimonious pretensions of the great mass of the clergy in our land." The warning shot was quickly answered and Garrison had defied the American clergy as such. His opponents, how-

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 134.

ever, still wavered; those who saw the battle from a distance were not slow to rejoice over such dissension. From certain signers in Andover Theological Seminary came at once another "Appeal," specifying charges of a more general nature.

Garrison was always so ready to make forcible rejoinders, and the "moment any one, even a real friend, has put a foot out of the traces," to turn fiercely upon him as a real foe—so at least it was charged—that it is uncertain how keenly he felt the beginning of what proved to be a serious defection. He did, however, show some sensitiveness at the publication of the various "Appeals" in the *New England Spectator* rather than in the *Liberator*. Following the Andover message, there soon appeared a second "Clerical Appeal" from the originators of the first, in which objection was offered to the *Liberator* as the official organ of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, an organization made up, as it certainly was in part, of those who did not and could not relish that paper's attack on their religious sentiments. The reply of the society, through its board of managers, showed clearly that no disposition was yet manifest to distrain Garrison or any one else as an individual from the expression of his own views. Still another "Appeal" pushed the contention into yet narrower limits and really brought this *Concio ad clerum* to an end, so far as it affected the *Liberator* or its editor. Lewis Tappan, however, in New York thought that the relations between the Massachusetts Society and its organ did give an opportunity for hostile criticism. In August, 1837,

Garrison wrote that the *Liberator* in case of a disjunction could live only through that year. Had the paper at this time been forced to separate itself entirely from all affiliations, it is probable that it would have embraced universal reform, and have come to grief. As it was, the assistance which it received in the cause of Abolition was derived mainly from persons of substance interested in that one cause. The advocates of "holy reform," to use Garrison's phrase, were not poor in spirit but were in no condition to subsidize a sinking newspaper. The American Society meanwhile kept a straight course toward the polar star—the emancipation of the slaves. Its organ, the *Emancipator*, made no reference to the various "Appeals" issuing in Massachusetts and did not take up the troubles of Garrison on one side or of the disturbed evangelicals on the other. The society also found it necessary to disclaim connection with persons seeking to promote principles other than those set forth in its own declaration. Before the year was out Henry Clarke Wright was dismissed by the executive committee, on account of his peace and "no government" doctrines, and the Grimké sisters were evidently under official displeasure for their mixing up Abolitionism and woman's rights in a disturbing fashion.

If Garrison did not hesitate to remonstrate forcibly with his friends for presuming to differ with him, it is also true that occasionally they would give him a taste of his own sharp medicine, which, however, they usually diluted with a Christian forbearance and delicacy. James G. Birney, as loyal

to the cause as any man could be, was displeased with Garrison's rejoinders to the "Appeals," and according to Garrison's admission, Birney's "former confidence in his judgment and prudence was shaken." Lewis Tappan, with a sanity of utterance foreign to the usual modes of anti-slavery discussion, reasoned with Garrison, told him that the cause could not afford to "drive away, or 'knock in the head' friends who are substantially right," and assured him that the troubles in Massachusetts were "unknown elsewhere." But Garrison did not then or ever have much toleration for those who were "substantially right." It was in the nature of the man, as it is in practically all dominant characters, to want submission as well as adherence, and this in spite of his iterated statements that the one demand to be made on a member of an anti-slavery society was a belief in the abolition of American slavery. To him the course of the American Society and its organ was "criminal and extraordinary," and he raised his cries of a wounded man still louder. Even a gentle letter from Elizur Wright, Jr., failed to move him except to more words. A paradoxical English writer has recently said that nothing will really drive one to insanity except logic. Garrison knew that he was right and he could always prove it from his own premises and to his own satisfaction. Yet, though he had reason on his side, hard and sure, he was lacking in sweet reasonableness—not in all things, but in the essentials, and often failed to see the merits of amiability, gentleness, and the persuasive attitude. If

the tolerance shown by others failed to please him, so did his relentless logical deductions from premises conceivably inadmissible, at times fail to persuade his equals in ability and moral energy. But his oneness of character seems never to have been doubted, and this did the most to pull him through the prodigious task he had set before himself. Seldom was he disingenuous, but when, after receiving such letters from Wright, who feared "spiritual Quixotism" for his friend, and from Lewis Tappan, he asked in the *Liberator* what the silence of the *Emancipator* "meant," he put the question in full knowledge of just exactly what it did mean —that his friends disapproved of his stopping the advance of a great reform to skirmish with a few malcontents.

At the meeting in October of the Massachusetts Society at Worcester, Garrison seemed to have suffered no loss of his local supremacy, but the *Spectator*, now owned by John Gulliver, a deacon under the Rev. Charles Fitch, one of the appellants, openly advocated a new sectarian organization. Back to the charge came Garrison with cries of "cant" and "Jesuitical whitewasher";—the argument fell lower and lower with recrimination and personal self-defense. All that he seemed to gain was an unbroken line of colored adherents.

CHAPTER VII

AN AWAKENING PEOPLE

FORTUNATE it was for the cause and its protagonist at this point that something more vital than logomachy providentially swept away for the time being all contention over perfectionism, holiness, clerical hypocrisy and other dissonances, and brought in, with tragic message, a new champion of Abolition—one in the main after Garrison's whole heart —the young, eloquent and scholarly Wendell Phillips. Conservatives, perhaps a little weary of holding up their horror-stricken hands so continually against Garrison, were to find in this new combatant a fresh object for condemnation. Phillips sprang into the contest at an eventful moment, when the whole country outside the slave states had its first realization that a successful continuance of slavery must involve a suppression not only of free speech, of the right of petition, but above all of a free press. Not until twenty-two years later when John Brown was hanged, was there such a general and sudden welling up of popular emotion as when the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy was killed while protecting the presses on which was printed his *Observer* in Alton, Ill. His story must be told, though briefly, for it had little to do with Garrison's personal career.

When Lovejoy was editor of the St. Louis *Observer*, he objected editorially to the burning alive in 1836 of a negro who had killed an officer while the latter was trying to apprehend him. The office of this paper was destroyed, and Lovejoy thereupon moved to Alton, where his press was soon broken; in August, 1837, his office and press were again ruined. In November of this year a new press arrived and Lovejoy's friends voted this resolution: "The cause of human rights, liberty of speech and the press, demand that the Alton *Observer* be reëstablished with its present editor." So near the border, this was nothing but rank defiance to every shade of pro-slavery sympathy, dangerous to manifest and difficult to maintain. Notwithstanding this condition of affairs, however, the mayor appointed a special force to guard the property of the paper, then in a warehouse. By nine o'clock in the evening, seeing no signs of trouble, most of this guard had left. Soon after a gang of what we should now call "hoodlums" attacked the warehouse and began to throw stones and to fire shots. The dozen of Lovejoy's friends who still remained returned the shots and one of the mob was killed. The building was then set on fire, and as Lovejoy came out he was shot down and killed; his press was destroyed and thrown into the river.

Such are the merest outlines of the most significant tragedy thus far in a cause which up to this time many had refused to admit was a cause. Lovejoy, though bearing the title of Reverend, was

militant ; he died while defending his own property and rights, but he defied with deliberate purpose the violent opinions of the place where he had decided to put his back to the wall. Garrison, no less brave, no less determined, would not have met shot with shot, but that did not prevent him from mourning Lovejoy's death. He was willing to admit that Lovejoy was a martyr, but not "a Christian martyr. He died like Warren, not like Stephen." Unyielding as ever, though his own cause was to profit immensely by this timely taking off, Garrison did not fail to inveigh against any of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth "resorting to carnal weapons under any pretext or in any extremity whatever." This man's consistency was a baffling thing to the worldly minded.

On December 8th, a public meeting of protest was held in Faneuil Hall, Boston, although an earlier petition, headed by Dr. William Ellery Channing, had failed to gain permission to use this building, still sacred to a Bostonian's faith in free institutions. To this meeting Garrison went only as a spectator. How could he keep away ; yet how could he well have spoken, a non-resistant in profession, without dampening an ardor which he knew ought to have fullest expression? Even the bitter enemies of Garrison—and they still exist—must admit that by his self-effacement on such an occasion he showed excellent taste. His sense of humor, too, doubtless told him how awkward it would be for his hearers—or some of them—to listen comfortably to a man whom two years and one

month earlier they came perilously near to serving as Lovejoy had just been served, but with the violence all on one side.

If Garrison did not say anything at this time, however, Wendell Phillips did. His sentence in reply to the socially august and important James Trecothick Austin, Attorney-General of Massachusetts, who, according to Garrison, had, in a "vile and inflammatory" manner, dared to compare the Alton rioters with some of the cherished idols of our Revolutionary days, will live as long as there are American schoolboys, and as long as there remains in this country a relish for the eloquence that sways and compels even when it does not convince. The decade which knew the overwhelming oratory of Webster's reply to Hayne had the good fortune to hear the deadly, penetrating forcefulness of the philippic which closed with: "For the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up!" Thus did Phillips really begin his career of unremitting radicalism; and from this time on he drew upon himself a measure of the attack hitherto reserved for Garrison alone.

Much has been said of Phillips's sacrifice of social position, but it may well be doubted whether he felt it keenly or concerned himself greatly about it. A gentleman's position is secure provided that he does not violate certain established traditions—and Phillips, born into a definite social stratum, continued to the end, correct, elegant, self-possessed,

well-bred and well-read. There was not a soul in the compact, highly decorous, comfortable Boston of those days who could possibly injure him except by a figurative sticking of tongue in cheek. It is wholly probable that Phillips, like many another of his class before and after him, was tired of mere decorousness. He was a Puritan, a Sam Adams kind of man, not an *arbiter elegantiarum*—and so found his way an easy one out of rather meaningless conventional restraints, and led henceforth a life of extraordinary austereness and simplicity. The habitual note of exaggeration in all that he uttered found no counterpart in his dress or daily habits. He was a very scourge to what seemed to him Pharisaism and he said in public many extravagant and needlessly cruel things which have served to place him, in the lapse of time, on a somewhat lower pedestal than Garrison, who had no "advantages" to lose, no position to forfeit, but who bore himself loftily at all times.

At about this eventful period the ranks of Abolition were also joined definitely by Edmund Quincy, the compeer of Phillips in education, social privilege, professional standing and personal distinction. Unlike Phillips, his ceasing to breathe exclusively the agreeable atmosphere of a complete respectability did not render him bitter, however positive in speech, or distrustful in attitude toward the class into which he was born and from which he never separated with violence. Yet it cannot be said of him that this son of a president of Harvard University, bred on polite compromises and gracious

toleration, was a whit less stern in his judgments or less unbending in his stand for human rights. He came rather deliberately to his private conviction that such extremists as the Garrisonians, however harsh their way of putting things, were right in principle. James Russell Lowell says that Quincy "early in life devoted himself deliberately to the somewhat arduous profession of gentleman." To a man reared to think as well as to speak restrainedly, the transition must have been sharp to his natural delicacy. It could not have been so easy for him as for Phillips to fellowship with those whose language and manners were almost uncouth by contrast with the associations of his former life. If to lose in some measure the warmth of earlier friendships was to drink the waters of Marah, there is no evidence that Quincy relished, as Phillips seems to have relished, the bitter taste.

The year 1837, which began with a renewal of petitions to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, was not to close without a sort of *rapprochement* between the younger Adams, old in years, but still young in moral ardor and intellectual belligerency, and his just recognized allies, the Abolitionists. Neither side made any pretense of admiring the other, but it was a gain to the larger aspects of anti-slavery when Adams at his home in Quincy received such positive characters as Birney, Francis Jackson, the Grimkés, Whittier, Goodell and even Garrison himself, who tells us that all were met "with respect and cordiality." For a man as particular about his political bedfellows as

Adams, this was a move toward a better mutual understanding. But within a year or so later that formidable old man was recording in his diary his unfavorable judgments of Emerson, Garrison, Brownson and other radicals, all of whom "come in, furnishing each some plausible rascality as an ingredient for the bubbling caldron of religion and politics." [1]

With the pro-slavery side and its timorous Northern supporters using every parliamentary device to prevent further protesting before Congress against the instituted fact of slavery, the Abolitionists now had reason to feel that they had at last driven their enemy from cover and that they might yet have a chance for a closer grapple. Judged strategically, their worst defeat of a political nature was the recognition at this time of the independence of Texas (1837); but the Abolition movement had as yet entered in no important way the political field, and its followers had good cause to rejoice. A tremendous impulse had been given to forces at work throughout the body social by an organization such as the American Anti-Slavery Society—mother already of a prolific and ever-increasing brood of subsidiary associations,—and by so stirring a tragedy as the Lovejoy murder. The mob spirit was already doing more good by opening the eyes of reputable citizens, hitherto closed in easy moral repose, than it could possibly do harm by smashing windows, throwing filth, and otherwise trying to frighten peaceful but exceedingly

[1] *Memoirs* of J. Q. Adams, Vol. X, p. 345.

resolute men and women who were sustained by that quiet courage of genuine radicalism which taught them to "dread the grave as little as their bed."

Ernest Renan says somewhere that no man may safely engage in more than one reform at a time, but must consecrate and employ his whole energy in a single moral enterprise. Was Renan right, or was Garrison a universal genius of philanthropy, covering ethically the whole human domain and ignoring no dark corners with the rays of his holy zeal? The country was now rapidly centring its attention, outside of direct political action, on the grave problem which he had been foremost in presenting, and Garrison at this time had full control of the *Liberator* after seven years of more or less restraint. Does his course confirm the truth of Renan's dictum, or was his widening progress henceforth in no way to weaken his now powerful influence?

In spite of a season of bodily infirmity, during which, as usual, he had recourse to therapeutic methods, as little recognized by the "faculty" as his methods of reform were recognized by that portion of society of which the medical profession was an integral part, the now untrammeled editor began to cut loose from the one-reform idea and, "guided by no human authority," make still more rapidly for the open. Proclaiming as fiercely as ever the need of abolition and welcoming all shades of opinion to this "common ground," he proposed to advocate the cause of peace and utterly to

repudiate the principle of justifiable violence, holding that the non-resistant tenets of the Quakers did not go far enough. His arguments on this thesis are a strange amalgam of Scriptural language and his own forcible editorial manner. In another, the constant and rather wearisome levying on Holy Writ would have been the veriest cant, but not in his case. When the fight was on, Garrison was an Old Testament man and thought and wrote the sometimes clear and sometimes cloudy language of prophecy. There was, of a truth, nothing pacificatory in this incessant demand for peace; the trumpet is a true weapon of war and the Garrisonian "*clangor tubarum*" was strident, though his theme was the bringing of the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Again, too, he pressed his demand for the rights of women "to their utmost extent."

We find him later in the year trying to carry out some of his various and large undertakings. At Philadelphia, whither he had gone to attend the Annual Convention of American Anti-Slavery Women, "our tongues," he writes, "were as busy as our hearts were warm," for "Abolition, Peace, Woman's Rights, Holiness, were the fruitful and important themes of the evening." [1]

It must be admitted that the influence of John Humphrey Noyes, leader of the Oneida Community and herald of the doctrine of Perfectionism, was strong upon Garrison and brought him trouble. He was even charged, absolutely without foundation,

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 211.

with cherishing the least savory of the doctrines of Noyes, an elastic conception of the sexual relation. Garrison found it possible to be as eclectic in his discipleship as he was in his recourse to medicine—he was, in fact, not of the right temper for a disciple. The truth is, that in advocating these various phases of a universal social redemption, he was only following the tendency of his day and generation. The Brook Farm movement was beginning to shape itself in cozy Boston parlors. Dissatisfaction with things as they are was in the air, like a brooding tempest; the older Unitarianism was under criticism; women were claiming their privileges and sometimes their rights. If old things were not actually passing away, certainly new things were rapidly asserting themselves. A few years hence theories, especially those of Cousin and Fourier,—the somewhat earlier influx of German thought having in great measure spent itself without much effect,—were to have a large hearing and some following. The country at last was rapidly arriving at self-contemplation in political and national affairs, while the more intellectual portion of American society was in agitation over problems not a few. It is no wonder, then, and not a matter for unkind criticism that Garrison felt the powerful ferment about him. It is a marvel that he kept his head so well and his abolition course so true in all this welter of ideas, for he was prone to start off in any inviting new direction. Fortunately for the greatest of his various causes, he belonged to none of the "sets" in Boston society then more interested in the vague

theories of the Newness than in the concrete fact that there were hundreds of thousands of human beings on American soil in a state of thralldom. A bull in a china shop would have adapted himself fully as well to the situation as Garrison, raging to break the chains of slavery, would have comported himself in a Transcendental *séance.*

The year 1838 witnessed the disappearance of the apprenticeship system, especially in Jamaica, the completing act of British emancipation in the West Indies. It also saw another outbreak of violence in America comparable to the Lovejoy tragedy in intensity, but more significant as happening in a far more civilized place than Alton, Ill. This was the destruction on May 17, 1838, of Pennsylvania Hall in the well-ordered city of Philadelphia. In this occurrence, so eventful in anti-slavery annals, Garrison, still in poor health, was a participant. The hall, built largely by Abolition money, was intended to be as true a temple of freedom as Faneuil Hall itself, which meant, as a matter of course, that its walls were to resound with extravagance, violent utterance, abuse, as well as with the real spirit of liberty. It was capable of holding large audiences and had architectural merit. Several days of anti-slavery discussion had been planned for and most of the principal fighters, men and women, were gathered in the new edifice of freedom.

In answer to the dedicatory address by David Paul Brown, Garrison, who found the orator unsound on the question of immediatism and a man

of gentle measures in regard to the whole matter of slavery, showed his exceptional qualifications for being "uncomfortable," when it was borne in upon him to be so. "If there be a neck to that discourse," he proclaimed, "let a stone be tied around it, and let it be sunk in the depth of the sea." Thus he proposed to rebaptize the hall and "wash out this stain of reproach." It was a perfect instance of his inability to fellowship with any one who preached half-measures or who showed a lack of absolute principles. An extremist himself, he probably always had more man-to-man respect for slaveholders than for the safe and sane men of that time.

The next day there had gathered an immense audience, among which were many Quakers, and naturally a preponderance of women, doubtless keyed up with expectancy after Garrison's boldness of the preceding day. No sooner had Garrison finished his address than a mob rushed in, and, finding nothing particular to do except to insult so large a body of women, rushed out again. It then began to use the usual insensate arguments of the inarticulate,—brickbats. Maria Weston Chapman, one of the noblest of all Garrison's adherents, addressed the meeting with that superb courage peculiar to women of such rare character as hers. She was followed by Angelina Grimké, just wedded to Theodore Dwight Weld, one of the most devoted of Abolitionists. With an equal courage she rejoiced that the "stupid repose" of Philadelphia had been aroused. Lucretia Mott and Abby Kelley,

other Abolitionists destined to become well known in the strife, next spoke. A day session of the Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women followed on Thursday, but in the evening the building was set on fire and entirely destroyed, the mob refusing to allow the fire-engines to do their work. The Anti-Slavery office was also destroyed, together with practically all of Benjamin Lundy's belongings. It was probably well for Garrison that he kept out of the way on that eventful night and was safely on the road to New England the next morning.

Evil is epidemic among the unthinking, and it is therefore not strange that only a strong military force, armed with ball cartridges, prevented a meditated assault on the just finished Marlborough Chapel in Boston, which was dedicated on May 24th, though, according to Garrison, in a rather tame fashion. Mayor John Swift of Philadelphia was as ineffectual in controlling riot as Mayor Lyman, but Mayor Samuel A. Eliot, father of the great president of Harvard University, who, when an alderman, had by his moral indifference to the conduct of the Garrison mob converted Dr. Henry I. Bowditch into a red-hot Abolitionist, now stayed threatened violence as firmly as he had quelled the fierce Irish row known as the Broad Street Riot just about a year previous to the Marlborough Chapel occurrence.

The *Life* by the Garrisons draws a close parallel between the Philadelphia and the Boston mob of 1835, and points out that in both cases violence was directed against assemblages of women. The Amer-

ican mind was not ready in the late thirties, nor is it ready yet, to consider as of overwhelming importance the complete emancipation of women from entanglements in part of their own making. But there were signs then of more than usual flurry in their behalf, just as there was excitement over many things. It would have been strange indeed had not Garrison been influenced by this particular phase of the general Newness. Action rather than abstract thought was characteristic of the women with whom he was associated. Of singular purity of character himself, he was well adapted to make helpful and inspiring friendships in either sex, with no basis other than a common and absorbing cause. But just as other men were unprepared for his radicalism in other ways, so were they unprepared to welcome women officially at any feast of reason on anti-slavery matters. Naturally enough, the clergy, falling back on tradition, were the most firmly opposed to innovations. Six orthodox ministers hastened to withdraw from membership in the New England Anti-Slavery Convention because of the passage of a resolution inviting women "to become members and participate in the proceedings."[1] Garrison, in answer to Whittier, who so far agreed with these malcontents as to hold that the admission of women had "nothing to do with the professed object of the convention," admitted that a discussion of women's rights was not relevant, but that the "gag" should not be applied to women "when they affirm that their consciences demand

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 220.

that they should speak." Such seems to have been the inception of a schism which was, in union with other dissensions, to bring trouble upon all Garrisonianism.

In spite of his indifferent health, mainly induced by a scrofulous condition, Garrison was so far from weary in well doing that he had prepared himself to break a lance with the American Peace Society and all similar bodies which seemed to him to be following an equivocal course. During the summer of 1838 plans were formulating for a convention, which was held at Marlborough Chapel in Boston on September 18–20th. Peace was its avowed object; but contentious harangues with the only weapon, offensive or defensive, permissible to its members, were to be expected. Abolitionists were in the majority, but the more conservative were there also, among them the Rev. Ezra Stiles Gannett, Channing's colleague, a godly but inelastic man. Garrison by his own admission "grieved him sorely" in replying to this clergyman's objection to a resolution that no man and no government has a right to take life on any pretext.

The practical side of Garrison was shown at the opening of the meeting by a suggestion that each person present should write "his" or "her" name on a slip to prevent mistakes in making up the roll; by this shrewd opening he brought the women delegates into the privileges of the convention. Presently the Rev. George C. Beckwith, lofty in the councils of the American Peace Society, was called to order by Abby Kelley—a high-handed

proceeding which led to the speedily-accepted resignations of several outraged brethren.

Garrison, as chairman of a committee of nine, wrote the constitution and declaration of sentiments, both of which, after some animated debate, were adopted. The declaration was so extreme that Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy, with several other well-known Abolitionists, felt unable to vote for it. Garrison himself felt the serenest confidence that he had drawn a great paper and that mankind would eventually "hail the Twentieth of September with more exultation and gratitude than Americans now do the Fourth of July." It stood out against "allegiance to any human government" and against all wars and "all preparations for war." It proclaimed that it was unlawful to bear arms or to hold a military office, to become a member of any legislative or judicial body, or to elect others as substitutes. So little was left in the world for the non-resistant actively to perform in the organic life of society that it seems a concession to the imperfection of human nature itself for a full right to have been granted to "assail iniquity in high places and in low places."

The American Peace Society and its ally, the New York Peace Society, found the new "Non-Resistant Society," the outcome of the convention, as little to their liking as the Colonization Society found Garrison's earlier endeavors.

The *Liberator* responded to the new advocacy of its editor, and into its columns had frequently to be squeezed something relating to peace and non-resistance, to the sacrifice of anti-slavery material. This

was not to the complete satisfaction of some of its adherents. One friend writes that "during the whole of this summer I have scarcely met a number in which there is not something which repels."

Miss Weston, sister of the intrepid Mrs. Chapman, too wise to oppose, suggested a divorce of the two interests and the establishment of a new paper; for "it is admitted by all, the doctrines of non-resistance are not identical with those of Abolition." The next year the *Non-Resistant*, with Garrison on the editing committee and bearing the motto, "Resist not Evil—Jesus Christ," came into existence, paid for itself for a time, and expired on June 29, 1842. The society, under the name of the New England Non-Resistance Society, ceased in 1849.

CHAPTER VIII

A HOUSE DIVIDING AGAINST ITSELF

THESE closing years of the first decade of the campaign for immediate abolition show plainly that astonishing progress had been made. How far Garrisonianism, pure and simple, had to do with these results, it is not possible to determine with exactness. Other portions of the country, especially Ohio and its affiliated neighbors, Pennsylvania and New York, were bringing forward new men and new ideas or variations of the original simple plan to work, undivided and unattached to political machinery of any kind, for the freeing of the slaves. Every day of the year a new local anti-slavery organization of some sort came into being.[1] The ecclesiastical front was beginning to waver, especially in that vanguard of religious progress, the Methodist church. Men running for office were obliged to declare their convictions, or certainly their intentions, on the absorbing topic. There were evidences that some Abolitionists would welcome a fuller connection with political activities, but the rank and file still held fast to the original working principle that party organization or political affiliation would injure the pristine integrity of the cause. Yet there was already a slight general movement toward the

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 143.

acceptance of political method, as witness the pledges circulated in the city of New York, committing the signers not to "vote for any man or representative to Congress who is not in favor of the immediate abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia." At a convention in Worcester, Mass., in October, 1838, there was claimed the right to form an anti-slavery party, while advising against it.[1]

It must be admitted, however, that in spite of spasmodic signs of impatience, the Abolition movement, dogged and unremitting, was still wonderfully coherent. The continual presentation of memorials to Congress hardened the pro-slavery heart as Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and gradually put the South on the offensive. Such was the sure working of the non-resistant influence in the Abolition cause. To offset this memorializing of Congress, the effectual closure of 1837 was passed, denying the right of slaves to petition. Then followed John Mercer Patton's gag, denying the presentation or reading of any petition for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, which was reaffirmed by a gag rule later in 1838.

Remote from these thickening contentions at Washington and elsewhere, the anti-slavery leader saw the year 1838 close with whispers of dissension and with a growing sentiment abroad that he was an enemy to some cherished religious ideals. Probably the grosser charges that he was of lax views as to what still goes under the euphemistic name "morality" were believed, if believed at all, by

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 245.

very few persons. It became necessary for his friends to defend him from the charge of being a breaker of the Sabbath (though in fact he wanted seven Sabbaths a week), and of being an enemy to Christianity, when he was trying or thought that he was trying, to put the principles of its Founder into practice. The *Liberator*, now approaching its ninth volume, was still making a struggle to live. Knapp, the printer and publisher, was deeply involved because of his attempt to carry on a publication bureau in addition to the paper. Again Garrison was set on his feet by a committee appointed to control the *Liberator's* accounts. Oliver Johnson was made a sort of editorial adjunct to him, while his own hands were left as free as ever. Free hands, however, will not necessarily enable a man to repel a rising tide.

Still he continued tireless as a debater and resourceful as an editor. He had the ever-sharpened retorts of the controversialist and was able to meet all arguments with keenness, logic, imperturbable control, and generally with good-nature. His armory of Scriptural phraseology was always full of burnished weapons, and he seemed to have well fortified the abolition defenses against the assaults of counter argument. Abolition was a religious, a moral contest, a veritable Holy War. The devil was not to be fought with fire or with his own methods. The ultimate enlightenment of the slaveholder by the persistent influence of the diviner spirit working through such humble instruments as himself and his followers was no small part of his program. He believed in the foolishness of preaching,

in the final triumph of good, but it does not appear that he clearly saw how the problem would eventually work out. That it did work out by means of bloody war and incalculable sacrifice of life and property was because, so he and the old-time Garrisonians held, the ploughshares and the pruning hooks of non-resistance and moral suasion were beaten into the swords and spears of political controversy and action. The great fallacy was to suppose that human nature, or that part of it coming into a fuller understanding of itself in the United States of America some seventy years ago, was so constituted that it could or would follow for long the path of pleasantness and peace and arrive at a predestined goal without political contest. This nation was born in strife, and when the deadlier sort ceased for a generation, men turned inevitably to political contention. It is still a marvel that even an enthusiast like Garrison did not recognize the particular make-up of this human nature that he was trying so hard to bend to his purpose. He lacked the sagacity of the later politicians who first made the people see things their way and then led them to suppose that the leaders were only the interpreters of the popular will. The "Peter Sterlings" were not yet at hand. The next two years will show the issue of a fight which, after much skirmishing, had really begun.

Even his most profound admirers will not attempt to say that William Lloyd Garrison was not dictatorial, sometimes as a speaker, sometimes as an editor, and more often than not as an organizer. A

politician may conciliate, a dictator must have his say. He must naturally have a strong hand on the seat of power, but he must look out for his provinces, where unrest often begins and spreads centreward. In the East, in New England, he kept his supremacy in spite of dissident Tracys and Phelpses and their following; he seemed to combat successfully the various sectaries and those who would cramp a quasi-religious movement into narrow channels; in spite of much feeling, expressed or silent, the public activity of women in the anti-slavery cause was growing as he sincerely wished it to grow. But outside of a considerably wide territory of which New England was the most vital part, his control, which depended so much on his personality and actual presence, was not so sure. In what then passed for the Near West, in Central New York, there was no such severe discipline as in Boston, and so it fell out that non-resistance, a complete withdrawal from political action, was not an acceptable doctrine in the outermost zone of Garrison's influence. Perhaps if he had lived in an era of special railroad cars and touring motors, he might have held Utica as firmly as he still held Boston and Providence, but perhaps not; for sooner or later he had to reach a democracy very well satisfied with its own methods and loving politics as the common stimulation of the life of the country. He did not win attention and rouse thought, as Lincoln did, by discoursing on equal terms in country stores with thinking but undisciplined men, every one a politician. Non-political action might be success-

fully driven home in Marlborough Chapel or in the parlor of some Abolitionist's family, but it did not warm the anti-slavery blood as far west as Utica, when Garrison was not there to push his argument or to kindle hearts with his manly beauty and his moral fervor.

The Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, which the year previous (1839) had paid into the treasury of the American Anti-Slavery Society more money than was collected from the whole state of New York, more than all of Pennsylvania and the rest of New England combined, and five times as much as Ohio,[1] was slightly behind in its guaranty of $10,000. This gave a chance for the parent society to insist that Massachusetts be opened to its own solicitors of funds. The annual meeting of the Massachusetts Society was held on January 23, 1839, and was largely attended. The leader of an opposition, bound this time to make itself felt, was Henry B. Stanton, one of the students who had withdrawn from Lane Theological Seminary, later the husband of a more famous wife, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. He was then in the pay of the executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society and was not in sympathy with non-resistance. Garrison had already sensed the plan to change the managers of the society and to crush the *Liberator* by starting a new weekly official organ in Massachusetts. Several clergymen, Torrey, St. Clair, and Colver, were the ringleaders of the scheme to unhorse the unmanageable editor, and they were sore amazed when they

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 261.

found themselves exposed in advance by the *Liberator*, which was ever alert for a newspaper "scoop." The Rev. Mr. Phelps went so far as to pronounce Garrison "a wicked man" on account of this exhibition of journalistic enterprise. The disaffected clergymen were now beginning to call Garrison tyrannical and spoke of his galling "yoke" and "brassy brow" without much reserve. Even the sober-minded Goodell from a distance dubbed him a "Napoleon." Stanton at this meeting, in urging the need of a new paper, said: "On the subject of peace, perhaps, he [Mr. Garrison] is nearer right than I am. But he has lowered the standard of Abolition." He then abruptly asked: "Mr. Garrison, do you or do you not believe it a sin to go to the polls?" "Sin for *me!*" was the reiterated answer of the adroit master of polemics, who the next day drew a resolution, afterward adopted, to the effect that Abolitionists who felt called by a sense of duty to vote, and failed to do so when there was a chance to aid the slave by going to the polls, were "recreant to their high professions and unworthy of the name they bear." Surely Garrison had a way of showing his enemies how shrewdly he might play politics if he had a mind to!

The opposition, thus routed, were still intent on starting the *Massachusetts Abolitionist*, "devoted exclusively to the discussion of slavery," and with Stanton temporarily in charge. The first number appeared on February 7th, and the price was one dollar a year, as against the *Liberator's* cost of two dollars and fifty cents. Friends of the *Liberator*

rallied to its support, new money was subscribed or brought in, and its purposes were upheld. In just three weeks after the annual meeting above described, the executive committee of the main society notified the Massachusetts Society that its own agents would henceforth attend to collections in the state, a step which seems to have been almost punitive in its intent. Stanton, Lewis Tappan, and James G. Birney appeared at the quarterly meeting of the Massachusetts Society to represent the attitude of the American Society, but the local board's action was overwhelmingly sustained, and by the 1st of May the money in arrears was raised.

A pledge was redeemed and promises were made good, but nothing essential was thus settled. Garrison, writing to his wife on May 2d, says: "I anticipate a breaking up of our whole organization. But my mind is calm and peaceful." In spite of his misgivings, he had been as active as ever, for on March 23d had appeared the first number of the *Cradle of Liberty*, a sort of weekly digest of the anti-slavery portion of the *Liberator*, for seventy-five cents a year, frankly intended to "hedge up the way of the *Abolitionist*." [1] The paper lasted a year and four months with a good circulation and was succeeded by the *Monthly Offering*.

It was not Garrison's intention to go to the anniversary meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society held on May 7–10, 1839, partly on account of the expense; the opening day, however, found him there, with the "flower of Massachusetts Aboli-

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 285.

tionism." Resourceful as ever, he managed to secure a ten minutes' limit to the speeches and, after prolonged discussion and in spite of the reactionary clergy, the admission of women delegates. He successfully moved several resolves to the effect that Abolitionists ought to help such men as will "advocate the repeal of every local enactment by which the aid of the public authority is lent to the support of slavery"; and that no member should be excluded from the society who had conscientious scruples against some of the measures favored, "as proper for the advancement of the anti-slavery cause." This was accomplished in spite of Birney's efforts, previous to the meeting, to show the absurdity of non-voters sending petitions to Congress or urging others to vote and of his attempt, at the meeting, to carry a resolve to the effect that it was inconsistent with the duty of Abolitionists under the Constitution to "maintain that the elective franchise ought not to be used by Abolitionists to advance the cause of emancipation." [1]

With every important attempt of the executive committee circumvented and his own basic doctrines sustained, it is no wonder that Garrison was temporarily cheered. Impartial minds, however, at this remote day, not sharing the fervor of his exaltation, do not find it easy precisely to understand the attitude of a man who would not and could not conscientiously throw a ballot in the cause of anti-slavery, but who found it proper to urge others,

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 299.

through formal declarations, to cast their votes. What wonder is it that some, with purposes as lofty as his own, such as Birney, Elizur Wright, and the Tappans, could find in this inconsistency a note of self-righteousness or a willingness to see a cause prosper by methods impossible to Garrison himself? Whatever opinion may be come at, relative to his thus making a scapegoat of fellow Abolitionists while his own "perfectionism" remained unsullied, there is no doubt that Garrison did find it morally possible to use politics at conventions and meetings, while he scorned honestly and fervently the evasiveness of Whig and Democrat alike. After all, the main defense for Garrison must be his own: that he believed in divine not human government; that he did not push his non-resistant doctrine as an Abolitionist; and that he wished to leave membership in all anti-slavery societies, the parent society in particular, untrammeled by requirements as to sex or sects or political action or anything else.

On May 29th, the day following the assembling of the New England Anti-Slavery Convention, the Massachusetts Abolition Society was organized, with Elizur Wright and the Rev. Charles T. Torrey as the two secretaries. The admission of women to membership in the convention was the ostensible *casus belli*, but the plan to make a schism in Massachusetts seems to have been carefully considered, with a view to the approval of the American Society. One more gap in the once solid anti-slavery sentiment opened when the National Convention of Abolitionists, meeting in Albany on the last day of

July, managed to snub Garrison by refusing to admit women as delegates and by failing to entertain his resolution in opposition to any projected plan for the nomination by Abolitionists of presidential or vice-presidential candidates. Futile as this convention proved to be, on the whole it did show a turn toward political activity and the possible inception of a third party. Garrison greatly dreaded such a movement, largely because a growing chance for maintaining an anti-slavery balance of power between the two great parties would then be destroyed. Moral and religious objections were also strongly urged by him with his usual vehemence and clearness of diction. The sentiment at this time in Ohio proved to be decidedly against a third party and in favor of the original methods of an unrestricted anti-slavery line of action. Stanton had attended the Western Reserve Convention held in October and seemed to fall in with the "Ohio idea"; but it was his real intention to "wait till both parties had nominated, and then, if Clay and Van Buren are the men, call a great convention to consider the wisdom of nominating."[1]

Shortly afterward, Garrison, hearing of a letter written by Elizur Wright to Stanton, forced Wright to print it in the *Abolitionist*. This letter pleaded hard for a "decided step toward presidential candidates" at the Ohio convention, urging among other reasons that if such a step were not taken, "our organization here is a gone case. It has been, *entre nous*, shockingly mismanaged." So, up to the

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 315.

close of 1839, nothing definite had resulted in favor of the Third-Party movement, although Birney, representing New York, and F. J. Le Moyne, Pennsylvania, had found it expedient to decline a nomination for the presidency and vice-presidency respectively, tendered them by a convention held in Warsaw, N. Y., in the month of November.

Intent thus far to proclaim a gospel adapted to human nature as it ought to be, rather than a policy that the American democracy, as constituted, might understand and possibly follow, the undaunted editor, still young but no longer youthful, began the year 1840 with his battle nearly won. There was opposition, but he had not been dispossessed of supremacy. The Third-Party movement, though still a small affair, was already beyond his control. New Organization, for so the seceders from his immediate following came to be called, continued their activities, against which he seemed able to hold his ground.[1] But the details of these contentions are not of sufficient importance to be rehearsed, especially since they differ in no essential way from the various strifes of the preceding year. Of interest to Garrison, if not to the country at large, was the "National Anti-Slavery Convention for Independent Nomination" which met in early April at Albany, and nominated Birney and Thomas Earle of Pennsylvania for President and Vice-President. Pennsylvania and Ohio sent none of the one

[1] According to Dr. Edward E. Hale, the two factions were dubbed "Old Ogs" and "New Ogs." *Memoirs of a Hundred Years*, Vol. II, p. 129.

hundred and twenty-four delegates, eighty-six per cent. of whom came from the state of New York. A month later these candidates were again nominated by a convention which followed the annual meeting of the American Society in New York City. Then came into formal being the small, ineffectual Liberty party, which by strange alliances proved to be the grandparent of the Republican party that seventeen years later was to make itself felt, and in four years more to carry the country against a divided Democracy. "It must be based," wrote Henry C. Wright, "on the divinity of the ballot box, or it is useless."

By this time Garrison had gained enemies of more consequence than a handful of Massachusetts clergymen, and among them William Goodell, a sane, dry man, who had opposed, with balanced mind, the "Clerical Appeal" and the "Non-Resistant" doctrines. If Goodell was not luminous, and if he took a sort of acrid pleasure in defining the "proper position of females," he was at least clear-headed. To-day his *Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, published in 1853, is about as definite and intelligible a statement as has been written of the varying situations of the movement. He had made up his mind that "Abolition and Non-Resistance can no more walk together than can Abolition and Colonization,"[1] and predicted the practical extinction of the American Society if the Garrisonian forces should prevail at the May meeting in New York. In this meeting assembled more than one thousand dele-

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 345.

gates, fully four hundred and fifty of them coming from Massachusetts and elsewhere in New England on a Sound boat, specially chartered in the interests of Garrison. About one hundred more friendly delegates went by other routes. Garrison had in the assembly a working majority of some ninety votes. There must have been scattered through all the free states, at this time, between one and two hundred thousand anti-slavery adherents, with strong abolition tendencies, a majority of whom really knew little or nothing, if Goodell is correct, of "what was going forward." One state effectually controlled an assemblage of national proportions. In the wicked game of politics, which Garrison abhorred, this would be called packing a convention. The New Organization, doubtless ready enough to use the same tactics, had it possessed the votes, figured inconspicuously. Arthur Tappan was re-elected president, but declined to serve, and even kept away from the sessions. The meeting confirmed the appointment by the vice-president, Francis Jackson, of Miss Abby Kelley on the business committee; thereupon Lewis Tappan, Amos A. Phelps and Charles W. Denison refused to serve on this committee, and the two former asked those "who had voted against the appointment of women to meet and form a new society." [1] Thus came to be formed the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the first presidency of which was accepted by Arthur Tappan. Lucretia Mott, Lydia Maria Child and Maria Chapman were put

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 349.

on the executive committee of the old society. It was then voted that by its constitution, the society did not attempt to determine whether it was or was not the duty of any member to go to the polls. Any support of the candidacy of Van Buren or Harrison for the presidency was discountenanced, and the course of the Liberty party at Albany disapproved of by resolution. Birney was thus ranked, not as a man but politically, with the two other candidates. It is no marvel that some of the minority must have felt with Chaucer's Chauntecleer that it was a case of *mulier est hominis confusio*. Some weeks before this meeting the executive committee had nominally transferred to the New York City Anti-Slavery Society the *Emancipator*, until then the official organ of the society. To this proceeding Garrison objected and held that the new holder was bound to restore the paper. It is evident from the transaction that the executive committee, forecasting defeat, was determined not to allow the *Emancipator* to get into the hands of any new committee which would proceed to convert the paper into a true Garrisonian organ. The price asked for a return of the paper into the National Society's keeping was prohibitive, and within a month plans were on foot to start the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*. Of the first number of the new official organ, Garrison, with his usual magnanimity, says: "It is a beautifully printed sheet, and makes a fine appearance. I am afraid, however, that it will cripple the circulation of the *Liberator*, by being put at so low a rate." [1]

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 389.

At first it was edited by various members of the society, but in 1841, Lydia Maria Child assumed charge. Like the *Liberator* the *Standard* outlived the Civil War, during which period Oliver Johnson and Edmund Quincy were the efficient editors.

As a final note of triumph, it was voted by the American Society, before adjourning, to send Garrison and his devoted adherent, N. P. Rogers, C. L. Remond, an accomplished man of color, and Lucretia Mott as delegates to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention to be opened in London on June 12, 1840.

Notwithstanding that the majority made "clean work of everything . . . with crashing unanimity," to use Garrison's words, and that the excitement had been keen, it is noticeable that these sounds of tumult seem not to have penetrated far westward. Even in those days, the West was settling matters in its own way and was not a dependency, socially or politically, on the East, to which, however, it still looked with respect in intellectual matters. The "proper position of females" did not much concern a wide territory where, from the beginning, women had exhibited equally with men the fortitude and self-sacrifice necessary to subdue the forces of a wilderness. The slight impression that this schism in the American Anti-Slavery Society caused outside of the Northern Atlantic states deepens one's conviction, in considering the anti-slavery movement from the start, that the various communities in western New

York and all those west of Pennsylvania went about the grave business of abolition largely in their own way. Garrison's was certainly a name in Ohio, as it was elsewhere, and he exercised a potent moral influence, but did not there determine policies or occasion feuds and cabals to disturb the momentum of a great cause. Anti-slavery was, in fact, organically democratic rather than federalistic, and did not tend especially toward centralization. The intense individualism of many of its followers would in a measure explain this. Perhaps we may better call it congregational in its structure so far as the cohesion and the interdependence of its continually increasing societies or organizations are concerned.

If detailed biographical narrative were the purpose of this book, it would be a pleasant task to follow Mr. Garrison and his companions across the water in the "fine large ship *Columbus*," which sailed for Liverpool on May 22d; accompany them to London and share the excitement of the convention, which they reached on June 17th, five days after it had begun; and finally to learn more of their foregathering with some of the distinguished men and women, who were keeping the spirit of reform ablaze in England.

But, eventful as was this journey in the personal life of the great Abolitionist, it must suffice to give here only its essential incidents. Anxiously leaving his wife, who was within a short time of another confinement, he did not fail to improve the occasion of his voyage by commiserating

the condition of the sailors, as well he might in those days, administering "burning rebukes" to the sinful passengers who passed the time "swearing, drinking and smoking"—equal offenses in his eyes—and not failing to drive home the horrors of slavery and all oppressions of humanity. Remond, on account of his color, was sent forward by the captain, a Virginian, to the steerage; here he was joined by William Adams, a Scotch Quaker from Rhode Island and a delegate, who was penalized for objecting to the harsh treatment of a sailor. Non-Resistant doctrine seems to have had its valuable side for some of the passengers in the good ship *Columbus*.

By decision of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, no tickets of admission to Freemasons' Hall had been issued to the women delegates. On the opening of the convention, Wendell Phillips, representing the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society which had sent, as delegates, among others, Harriet Martineau, Maria Chapman, Lydia Maria Child, Abby Kelley, Emily Winslow and Mrs. Wendell Phillips, moved the appointment of a committee instructed to include the names of all persons bearing credentials from any anti-slavery society. The Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society had sent as delegates Lucretia Mott and four other women, all Quakers except one. Both American societies, in so doing, had acted with full knowledge that a member of the executive committee of the British society had discouraged the inclusion of any women as delegates. Dr. John

Bowring and William Henry Ashurst were the most prominent Englishmen to support Phillips, who "refused to have a World's Convention measured by an English yardstick." George Thompson, not showing the same implacable spirit on his own soil as he did in America, urged that the motion be withdrawn. The British clergy, leaning back heavily on Holy Writ and Saint Paul, sparkled tersely on woman's proper sphere. The motion was lost, but Mr. Phillips did not bolt the convention. Garrison on his arrival decided to do nothing to disturb the remaining three days of the session, and sat in the gallery—a very Hamlet, watching from above a drama of which he was the chief and necessary character. He must have been cheered by the thought, for he had abundant fun in his disposition, that Polonius would be fully represented by the New Organizationists, who had without doubt inspired the British society to its conservative stand. He could not be lured from this coign of vantage, but did not lack company, for on the second day Lady Byron sought out both him and Remond. Bowring had Garrison to breakfast and Miss Martineau thought he was "quite right to sit in the gallery." The great Daniel O'Connell, a rock on all anti-slavery matters, sided with the banished ones, calling the exclusion "a cowardly sacrifice of principle to a vulgar prejudice."

In spite of this episode, which colored the whole convention and tended to minimize the purpose for which it met, there were brought out good anti-

slavery sentiment and searching criticism of the supine attitude of the churches. If women proved unacceptable in their councils to the slow-paced British mind, the English were not lacking in hospitality, and heard Remond, late from an American steerage cabin, with enthusiasm. "Prejudice against color is unknown here," Garrison had the pleasure of writing to his wife, by this time the mother of a "fine boy," Wendell Phillips Garrison, who inherited many of the noble qualities of his parents.[1]

Meeting in a pleasant way with Amelia Opie, Elizabeth Pease, Elizabeth Fry, the Howitts, O'Connell, Thomas Fowell Buxton, Robert Owen, Samuel Gurney, the Duchess of Sutherland and her brother Lord Morpeth, Benjamin Haydon, the artist, and other notable and worthy persons, Garrison's stay rapidly drew to an end, and he sailed back on August 4th, but not until he had made an excursion to Edinburgh, where he addressed an immense temperance meeting. He found time to write a long letter to Joseph Pease, the English Quaker Abolitionist, in which he elaborated his doctrine of peace and the use of moral and religious measures for the suppression of evil. He also urged England to purchase only cotton raised by free labor, and to keep up the policy for seven years, at the expiration of which period "American slavery would be peaceably abolished."

[1]He died in 1905, after an editorship of forty years on *The Nation*, where he always displayed a patience and a sense of justice, equal to his father's, as well as an ability wholly his own.

Garrison thoroughly enjoyed himself in Scotland, which he seemed to prefer to England; for the fearful contrasts of luxury and grim want in England distressed his sympathetic soul. He had a few memorable days in Ireland, where he and his friends "spread a glorious contagion," according to Richard Webb, an Irish Quaker and a printer of sterling worth as well as sound anti-slavery principles. For him and for his wife Hannah, Garrison cherished an affection which endured to their end. Their son, Alfred Webb, was also of the faith, and many years later was a valued contributor, under the signature of "D. B.," to *The Nation* during the editorship of W. P. Garrison.

Leaving Liverpool on August 4th, the never-resting agitator was back in time to be present at a reception given him in Marlborough Chapel, Boston, on August 20th, "the first instance of a mixed assembly [of white and black] being thus brought together in Boston."[1] He found large occasion, as many Americans have found before and since, to rejoice that he was born in the United States—in spite of the territorial magnificence of the *Liberator's* motto—where he could deal with the people and not with classes. He asked his colored friends to sympathize with the misery of other races, especially with the "poor, oppressed Irish," for whom he always seemed to feel a particular solicitude, though, as immigrants in this country, they made him but poor return for his loyalty. They

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 407.

had serious problems of their own to absorb their attention during the anti-slavery period.

Well-satisfied with his trip abroad, during which he had not failed to "sift into" other minds his various heterodoxies, particularly non-resistance and total abstinence, Garrison on his return had to face the fact that many Abolitionists, as sound as himself, had come to feel that the heated presidential election of 1840 demanded more of them than zeal for ethical abstractions. Even the devoted Samuel E. Sewall deserted the field of political inaction. Many were Whigs or Democrats before they were baptized into Abolitionism and these felt the urgent call of party; while some, deserting both early affiliations and the sincere milk of Garrisonianism, turned toward the Liberty party. "Politically intoxicated," the champion of an absolute standard in a shifting democracy was only too ready to call them.

With the national society out of funds, its official organ struggling hard for life, the *Standard* in extremities, and tried and true friends making ready to hie to the detested polls, one might suppose that Garrison was distressed by such ominous conditions; but if he was, his letters and public utterances show no flinching. Even when his flat purse and its small contents disappeared after a thinly attended convention in Worcester, early in October, he, with that excellent humor of his, only said that he felt like an animal, "denuded of its fur," and renewed his trust in the Lord. He did not neglect, however, to encourage the departure of John A.

Collins, general agent of the Massachusetts Society, to obtain money to replenish the anti-slavery finances. Collins was followed across the water by what seems even at this day like malice on the part of the Rev. Nathaniel Colver, and was met in England by the opposition of Captain Charles Stuart, now hostile to the Garrisonian program.

Meanwhile Garrison had brought upon himself more odium of infidelity by becoming identified with a movement of a curiously mixed organization that set out to reach a spiritual principle and fundamental truth in the field of denominational differences. Through uncouth efforts in meetings or "conventions," as all assemblages in those days seem to have been called, it invited free discussion of a jumble of religious and non-religious theories and fancies. Though this movement did not originate with him, it found in Garrison a vigorous and most conspicuous adherent. It had its beginnings with the "Friends of Christian Union," in a meeting at Groton, Mass., in August, 1840, while Garrison was on the Atlantic. Every person who had or thought he had an idea to contribute flung it into the bubbling cauldron of "free discussion." Later the "Friends of Universal Reform" decided to hold a second meeting in order to "examine the validity of the views which generally prevail in this country as to the divine appointment of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, and to inquire into the origin, nature, and authority of the ministry and the Church, as now existing." The result of the call was the Chardon Street Convention, held

November 17–19, 1840; it was the most famous of the many meetings at that temple of free discussion, the Chardon Street Chapel, in Boston.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, who saw not too closely from his serene height the ironic and fantastic shows of human nature, was not too remote to poke benignant fun at the extravagancies then rife, even when he sympathized mildly with the principles underlying, and in this spirit of seraphic bantering he describes the gathering: "The singularity and latitude of the summons drew together, from all parts of New England and also from the Middle States, men of every shade of opinion from the straitest orthodoxy to the wildest heresy, and many persons whose church was a church of one member only. A great variety of dialect and of costume was noticed; a great deal of confusion, eccentricity, and freak appeared, as well as of zeal and enthusiasm. If the assembly was disorderly, it was picturesque. Madmen, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-Day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians, and Philosophers, —all came successively to the top, and seized their moment, if not their hour, wherein to chide, or pray, or preach, or protest." [1]

The proceedings of the convention, different in no essential way from other manifestations of the general restlessness then epidemic, would demand no mention in detail here were it not for the conspicuous part Garrison played during these three days of

[1] Emerson, *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, p. 351.

discussion,—discussion without conclusion or the adoption of any resolution. Among the signers of the call were some names not identified with the old-time radicals, such as Theodore Parker and William Henry Channing, more representative of the Unitarian "left" than of anything else; George Ripley, then on the eve of his Brook Farm venture; James Russell Lowell, just of age and through the Harvard Law School; the poet Cranch; and as a looker-on, Dr. Channing. The various conservative points of view of the Sabbath as the one day of the week to be kept especially holy were fully represented, while Garrison took the lead in advocating the Sabbath-every-day heresy. "There was less boring, on the whole, than we had a right to expect," writes Edmund Quincy of this deliberative assemblage of which no authoritative report exists. Father Taylor, one of the extraordinary and eloquent personalities of the day in Boston, and Abby Folsom and Dr. Mellen, both mentally disturbed trouble-makers in all public gatherings where they were suffered to speak, used the full privileges of a convention under no definite control.

It is of interest to observe that when it was proposed to limit the argument to the discussion of the teachings of the Bible on the subject of the meetings, Garrison supported the motion, which failed of adoption. He argued that since the Bible was the only source from which any idea of a Sabbath, a church, or a ministry could come, therefore the Bible alone must be the foundation for all consideration of the topics proposed. At the first

Chardon Street convention the Sabbath was the only subject discussed. The chief supporters of the divine authority for observing the first day of the week were two Abolitionist clergymen of the wing opposed to Garrison, the Rev. John Pierpont and the Rev. A. A. Phelps, his earlier fellow lecturer, for whose candor and logical power he had great respect. Garrison took the lead on the other side, on the ground that the coming of Jesus had abolished the duty of observing the Sabbath as being part of the ceremonial obligation of the Old Law. This law Jesus had come not to destroy but to fulfil by substituting for its formal requirements a higher spiritual obligation. The Christian, in Garrison's view, was bound to sanctify all days alike by sanctifying the whole of life.

The Rev. Nathaniel Colver was among his adversaries at these meetings, and just after their close he sent two letters to members of the London Committee, not only, as has been seen, discrediting Collins, as agent of the Massachusetts society, but also charging Garrison with heading "an infidel convention," picking up "every infidel fanaticism afloat," and joining with "no-marriage perfectionists, transcendentalists, Cape Cod [come-outers (?)]" in an attack on the Bible and the ministry. These letters came to Garrison's hands, and he commented on them with a burst of wrath which closed as follows: "My friends in England may rest assured that this pretended zeal of Nathaniel Colver for the institutions of religion, and this slanderous assault upon my religious views, proceed from

personal animosity toward myself; nor would they be led astray by any false statements he might be disposed to make, if they knew him as well as he is known at home by those who are able to discriminate between the form of holiness and the power of it." [1]

Once more Garrison was gleefully afforded by his enemies an opportunity to place himself in such a position that he would make no converts, but merely alienate some hesitating souls, already beginning to doubt him as a safe guide. There is no reason to suppose that Garrison was in any way deluded by what was going on. If he remained of brave heart at this time, writing more sonnets and keeping up the old editorial vigor, it was largely because he had not yet seen any new light to persuade him to alter his course, dark as it may have been. The Liberty party's small showing at the national election was to have been foreseen, and its efforts brought no conviction to his mind that he ought to involve himself in the movement and in the necessary limitations and obligations entailed on any party allegiance. But as the filial biographers have wisely admitted, the rise of this little party "marks the end of the expansion of the purely moral organization of the anti-slavery sentiment of the country." [2]

From this point on we shall have to consider Garrisonianism in relation to the other advancing efforts to oppose not only slavery itself, but the

[1] *Liberator*, Vol. XI. p. 19 (Jan. 29, 1841).
[2] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 434.

manifestation of the slave power. This power was contending in a great game in which the states and territories were the squares and statesmen and their parties were the figures to be played. Its opponents were not, so it was believed, a handful of men and women in Boston chapels disintegrating what union they had among themselves by futile Sabbatarian, perfectionist, non-resistant and other mad doctrines. Rather was the rest of the country now beginning to feel dimly than to think clearly that the union of states must be saved by removing from democratic government a powerful and irreconcilable element, an *imperium in republica*, to be eliminated only by slow constitutional and political processes or else by the swifter methods of force. Any increasing solidarity of action by this democratic body was cause for anxiety on the part of the slave power, well equipped with resourceful and competent intellects. The movement rising in central New York, impotent as it proved to be in its first electorial try-out, was of more concern to the tide-waiters of politics than was any "moral organization," all the paths of which were peace. The foolishness of preaching once more seemed doomed to meet its usual fate from a froward generation.

CHAPTER IX

THE INFIDEL GARRISON

It is fitting at this point to fall back a little and retrace somewhat carefully the steps by which Garrison had arrived at so great an alienation from beliefs once formally cherished by him. The mere annals of biography do not altogether supply the enlightenment necessary to avoid a misjudgment of his career at this crisis.

Up to 1835 he had arraigned the churches for being false to their mission, but felt and uttered no disturbing unorthodox sentiments. Between that year and 1840 he followed a path of rapid departure from the accepted religious ideas of his day, until he had reached a position far from any kind of orthodoxy, however vaguely defined. Naturally, he ceased in time to have any connection with organized religious activity, except that he attended the annual meeting of the creedless body of "Progressive Friends." Devout by nature, he came to live his religious life so entirely with the spirit that he found every incarnation of the faith which was a force within him inadequate to express his passion for righteousness. According to Cardinal Newman, heresiarchs, among whom Garrison must surely be reckoned, are commonly men of singular purity of character, who, seizing upon some neglected article of faith or morals, make it the dominant element of

life, instead of one among many parts in the manifold unity of perfection. To the orthodox, that is to say, to those who accept a traditional faith and an established ideal of conduct, such men are of course abominable. To proclaim a standard of conduct severer than the one commonly accepted is in itself wounding to the sensibilities of all those who do not adopt the new doctrines. It strikes at the very heart of the professional teaching of morals.

By those who hold to traditional beliefs, the visions of new or neglected truth, the heresies of too ardent a desire for perfect holiness, are looked upon as constituting a more pernicious infidelity than the deadness of mere unfaith. They are pregnant with obscure and dangerous implications. They generally express an independent way of viewing life, which, not clearly perceived by the leaders who put them forward, is later brought distinctly into consciousness, and proves destructive to ancient forms of faith. So it had been with Garrison. At first embracing an evangelical Christianity, but with a living belief, not with the half-belief of the average conformist, whose compromise with the world is infused through his whole moral being, he had banned church and clergy for cowardice and moral blindness in failing to do their duty when judged by the standards of their own professed doctrines. Later, he found the orthodox formulas themselves inadequate, and brought on himself the charge of infidelity. With the passage of years, he put forward his beliefs more connectedly and prominently, and accordingly provoked to increased energy the

indignation due to the severity of his rebukes and to his heresies. Gradually, too, he brought all parts of his moral and intellectual activity into close coherence.

One feature of Garrison's nature was an extreme simplicity of constitution, which caused his acts to be the immediate symbols of his thought and faith. Faiths were to him not mere intellectual convictions, but controlling powers in his life. He had no conception of a belief accepted and not acted upon. He had not in the slightest degree a "problematic nature"; there were no complicating obstructions between his mind and his life. He could never have understood the saying: "The thing that I would not, that I do." There is no greater source of courage, power, and joy than a nature like Garrison's. He was confident in defeat, serene in the midst of annoyances; happy without indifference, even when the vision of human injustice was before his eyes; and authoritative as a messenger from God, no matter how men might assail and events might seem to discredit his teachings. He took to himself with implicit confidence the belief that Jesus is the model and inspirer of life, and put his faith into practice by laboring for the slave. Surely, it seemed to him, He whose special mission on earth was to the humble and the despised, who offended the social prejudices of His age by eating with publicans and sinners, would not have left the slave outside the sphere of His sympathies. He who came to give light to the world would not have endured the walling off of millions of men from the

light shining for others. He whose function was to elevate manhood and to inculcate the dignity of the individual soul would not have been satisfied to leave the souls of millions in bondage. Garrison, in his bitter condemnation of slaveholders and his savage rebukes of the clergy who condoned slaveholding, felt himself but the follower of Him who taught a noble wrath by His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, the clerical respectability of His age, and who drove out the money-changers from the fore-court of the temple, where they had a prescriptive right to be. Likewise he thought himself the follower of Him who came to bring not peace but a sword, in promulgating the one gospel of the day which had the power to set clearly opposite to each other the forces of light and darkness in American life.

The Church, in glory and agony, is perpetually bringing forth children whom she must perpetually disown. She teaches an uncompromising personal holiness; the germs at least of an ascetic, communistic, even anarchistic ideal are to be traced in her Founder's life and teachings. Ardent and logical souls in every generation are thus provoked to revolt or to separate from the accepted order. Yet the Church, being planned for permanence, is inevitably conservative. As it essays to stimulate and guide sentiment and emotion, it must be supported by sentiments and emotions already formed and fixed. It cannot shock its members by teaching a new or a forgotten truth for which they are not prepared. In the nature of things the cloth opposed

Garrison, while at the same time the source of his abolitionism was Christian faith, his arguments were at bottom theological, and his strongest supporters were either in the ministry or had prepared for it.

To Garrison, the lack of moral initiative in the Church and the ministry seemed like recreancy and practical apostasy. It was, indeed, in his mind the Unpardonable Sin, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, vulgar anathematization of the inspiration of God as revealed in the only overpoweringly important message of the time to the American people. To those ministers who, by failing to condemn slavery, were in his mind not delivering the essential truth for their time, he applied Isaiah's name for the prophets who did not fulfil their mission—"Dumb Dogs." Looking upon the Church as a reality only so far as it was the depositary of truth, the incarnation of a faith, he proclaimed that any church which admitted the slaveholder to its communion had *ipso facto* cut itself off from communion with the spirit of Jesus, and that all true Christians must have no fellowship with it.

The condemnation of the actual Church and the reprobation of the actual ministry, however irritating to Garrison's opponents, did not imply departure from established doctrinal standards. In point of fact, Garrison abandoned them only one at a time. The attitude of the clergy upon slavery forced upon him the question of the authority of the clergy, and the official action of various denominations obliged him to consider the relation of the be-

liever to the depositary of faith when that was itself recreant to the truth.

Garrison repelled with energy the charge that he was an infidel, proclaiming in effect that his theology was that of the Friends, and declaring his reverence for the "true authority" of the Scriptures; —"they are my text-book, and worth all the other books in the universe."

The immediate object of Colver's attack on him after the Chardon Street Convention of November, 1840, was to discredit him in the minds of his English supporters. As a purely moral agitation, the cause of anti-slavery had claimed and received the aid in money and activity of the friends of man throughout the world, and especially in England. The attack met with instantaneous success. Collins wrote home to Garrison, "Woman's rights and non-governmentism are quite respectable when compared to your views." Garrison was there regarded as a follower of Owen, as a socialist and a free-lover; and the opposition to him grew so strong that his adherents on the London Committee were held by their opponents as personally unfriendly and as unfaithful to the cause.

Torrey and Phelps, both ministers of the Gospel, supported Colver's charges, and combining all the obnoxious ideas of the day, no-government, woman's rights, no-marriage, non-resistance,—into one amalgam of horrid beliefs, strove to fasten the corrosive mass upon Garrison. It is no wonder that it adhered. The public never makes fine distinctions. And in a generation when decorating a church with flow-

ers was widely denounced as desecration, it would have been too much to expect Garrison's radical views of religion not to be regarded as tantamount to infidelity.

Garrison, in the meantime, moved by his simple and undisturbed faith in the power of truth and the rightness of the world, did not hesitate to realize the needs of his soul by pursuing the path upon which he had begun to walk. Though he had nothing to do with calling the first Chardon Street meeting, he moved the convening of a second in March, 1841, to discuss the origin and authority of the ministry. He did not address this convention, but exerted a potent influence in guiding its activities, and later expressed the most anti-ecclesiastical views on the subject.

At a third and the last convention, held October 26–28, 1841, the Church was discussed, and Garrison's mystic idealism and individualistic spirit are expressed in the resolutions introduced by him. They contain affirmations, "that the true Church is independent of all human organizations, creeds, or compacts . . . that it is not in the province of any man, or any body of men, to admit or to exclude from that Church any one who is created in the divine image; . . . that it is nowhere enjoined, by Christ or His apostles, upon any man that he should connect himself with any association, by whatever name called; but all are left to act singly, or in conjunction with others, according to their own free choice." [1]

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, pp. 7–8.

The distinct heresies of Garrison upon the standards and the constitution of the Church were much less fundamental and provoked less opposition than two other articles of his creed,—"perfectionism" and "non-resistance," already referred to, but of which somewhat fuller mention must now be made. While the logical basis and relationships of these doctrines are simple and easily explained, their actual genesis in American life, the way in which they were viewed in the time of Garrison, and their relation to the many diverse tendencies of that divided age are extremely complicated. Their ultimate source is the French rationalism of the eighteenth century. But as hitherto stated, the spread in America of the conception of perfectionism was due mainly to the preaching of John H. Noyes, a man whose influence on Garrison is clearly traceable, and who is best known as the founder of the Oneida Community. The doctrine of the obligation of moral perfection is susceptible of many interpretations. It may mean that as he who is regenerate is capable of fulfilling the whole law; any who fail at any point are not truly regenerate,—in other words, that the grace of the regenerate is indefeasible and perfect. Such a doctrine may easily result in spiritual pride and a harsh and gloomy contempt for mankind. On the other hand, the same doctrine is consistent with the teaching that perfection is a matter of the heart, and that the conduct of the regenerate man, no matter what it is, cannot be wrong. Such a doctrine easily leads into a practical antinomianism

of the wildest sort. Noyes had seemed to be tending in the latter direction. In particular he had been led by the many obvious miseries of the ordinary conjugal relation, and the inconsistency of ordinary sexual morality, to propound a new system for regulating the relations of the sexes. The adversaries of Garrison naturally took advantage of the opportunity offered them by his accepting some of Noyes's tenets to represent him as accepting all, and to make him out an enemy of the very foundations of society. Garrison, with proper resentment, denied this charge and expressed his belief in the institution of marriage, which Noyes, ranking a wife as a species of property, rejected as he did all kinds of private ownership. At the same time, Garrison, with worldly imprudence and impersonal generosity, refused to join the chorus of condemnation chanted in many keys against the doctrine of "holiness," that is, the possibility and duty of "entire sanctification in this present life." The language of his justification shows how close was the association in his mind between the rights of the negro, as he regarded them, and the obligation to perfect holiness:

"Holiness is incompatible with robbery, oppression, love of dominion, murder, pride, vainglory, worldly pomp, selfishness, and sinful lusts. But these ecclesiastical bodies are determined to make a Christian life compatible with a military profession, with killing enemies, with enslaving a portion of mankind, with the robbing of the poor, with worldliness and ambition, with a participation

in all popular iniquities. Hence, when abolitionism declares that no man can love God who enslaves another, they deny it, and declare that man-stealing and Christianity may co-exist in the same character. When it is asserted that the forgiveness instead of the slaughter of enemies is necessary to constitute one a Christian, they affirm that to hang, stab, or shoot enemies, under certain circumstances, is perfectly consonant with the spirit of Christ. Thus they make no distinction between the precious and the vile, sanctify what is evil, perpetuate crime, and honor what is devilish. They are cages of unclean birds, Augean stables of pollution, which need thorough purification. . . .

"As men who are conscious of guilt should not attempt to excuse themselves, so should they not countenance sin in others. . . . Instead, therefore, of assailing the *doctrine*, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect,' let us all aim to establish it, not merely as theoretically right, but as practically attainable; and if we are conscious that we are not yet wholly clean, not yet entirely reconciled to God, not yet filled with perfect love, let us . . . be willing to be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." [1]

Garrison's standard of outward conduct, it may well be said, was one with that set by the more severe evangelical sects. Though he disapproved Sabbatarian restrictions imposed by law, he observed Sunday in his household as a day of grave

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, pp. 14, 15.

though not gloomy rest. As for theatres, the following dismal paragraph appeared in the *Liberator* of March 13, 1840, the same year in which the holding of the Sabbath convention caused him to be so bitterly denounced. "No truly good man can regard the present condition of the theatres of Boston but with intense delight. These deep and powerful sources of evil, which have for many years sown and nourished corruption in its most dreadful form, among all classes of the community, seem destined speedily to become extinct. This is an omen of good to which no boundaries can be affixed, and which the enlarged and constantly increasing attendance at the meetings of our institutions, moral and religious, furnishes almost incontestable evidence that we may soon realize."

The doctrine of non-resistance, taught alike by Garrison and by Noyes, was still more fundamental in Garrison's creed than that of holiness. Like the rest of his doctrines it was lumped for condemnation with all kinds of infidelity. For instance, the Rev. Edward Beecher, president of Jacksonville College, Illinois, is said [1] to have "prognosticated the speedy end of the world by 'the general wickedness which prevailed, the doctrines of the perfectionists, non-resistants, deists, atheists, and pantheists, which are all those of false Christs.'" The non-resistant, accepting literally the words, and obeying literally the conduct of Jesus, with perfect confidence in their practicability and reasonableness, taught, first of all, the duty of abstaining from violence as

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 14.

a private obligation between man and man. Hence all attempts to punish or take vengeance on a wrong-doer by physical compulsion or restraint were sinful. As between nations, likewise, war was forbidden; a soldier was a murderer. The doctrine was obviously incompatible with capital punishment. Slavery, resting necessarily on compulsion, was peculiarly hateful, the sum of all abominations, to the non-resistant. It was nothing but perpetual private war. The logic of non-resistance, however, fairly considered, goes much further still. The existence of all governments depends ultimately upon their power to exert force. Not only capital punishment, but all the penalties of law are constraints put upon men by external force. The equality of the law consists simply in the fact that the organized force of society is exerted against the disobedient. Hence non-resistance was regarded as a no-government idea,—as a philosophical anarchism. The non-resistant may suffer the force of government; he will never employ it. He cannot plead in a court to recover his debts, or fill any public office, or perform the commonest duties of citizenship.

When the destructive nature of these ideas was insisted upon, Garrison answered by saying, in effect, that government is an inevitable consequence of the sins and faithlessness of mankind. As things are, he admitted, a society without a government would be self-destructive, and must, to protect itself, reëstablish the rule of ordered force. Yet the fault, he contended, lies not in the ideas of

non-resistance, but in the sinfulness and faithlessness of mankind. The confused logic of this argument is characteristic of Garrison's treatment of other fundamental questions. The doctrines of non-resistance will not bear thus to be reduced to truisms. Assuredly if no man did wrong, there would be no need of punitive law; but the question is, if men do wrong, what must be done? If it is wicked to exert violence upon them, every officer of the law is a sinner, and only the wicked can be called upon to govern. The non-resistant's view of life implies that a man has a right to seek for the good of his own soul without regard to what he can do for the welfare of mankind, that he has a right to a beatitude bought by the withdrawal from life. Such views might justly seem dangerous to all who believed in maintaining society in which the violently wicked must be controlled, and who looked with dread on the possibility of weakening the foundations of social morality.

The elements of Garrison's creed have been presented separately. They had their principle of unity in a belief in the all-importance of the individual. Garrison's function was not even primarily the emancipation of the slave—that was but an incident in a larger work; namely, his contribution to the emancipation of the individual soul in America. "The years between 1820 and 1830," says Mr. John Jay Chapman in his essay on Emerson, "were the most pitiable through which this country has ever passed. The conscience of the North was pledged to the Missouri Compro-

mise, and that Compromise neither slumbered nor slept. In New England, where the old theocratical oligarchy of the colonies had survived the Revolution and kept under its own water-locks the new flood of trade, the conservatism of politics reinforced the conservatism of religion; and as if these two inquisitions were not enough to stifle the soul of man, the conservatism of business self-interest was superimposed. The history of the conflicts which followed has been written by the radicals, who negligently charged up to self-interest all the resistance which establishments offer to change. But it was not solely self-interest, it was conscience that backed the Missouri Compromise, nowhere else so strongly as in New England. . . . It was the spiritual power of a committed conscience which met the new forces as they arose, and it deserves a better name than these new forces afterward gave it. In 1830 the social fruits of these heavy conditions could be seen in the life of the people. Free speech was lost. . . . So long as there is any subject which men may not freely discuss, they are timid upon all subjects. They wear an iron crown and talk in whispers. Such social conditions crush and maim the individual, and throughout New England, as throughout the whole North, the individual was crushed and maimed." [1]

It was Garrison's work to help in breaking this oppression, "heavy as frost, and deep almost as life." When he had spoken out, the whole air

[1] *Emerson and Other Essays*, pp. 6, 7, 9.

was freer and the heavens were lighter above the heads of men. The adjustment of the freedom of the individual and the control of society is one of those fascinatingly infinite problems forever approximated and never accomplished. Order will be preserved because it must be; but freedom in each generation must be fought for. With the advance of civilization, the increasing complexity of the social order allows a greater scope of freedom, and is at the same time fertile in new forces of oppression, more remote and delicate but no less real than those of past ages. In each generation men must be raised up to struggle lest the past should saddle and weight the future; and to Garrison was allotted the glory of being a voice, and a mighty voice, of freedom for his age. Such men as he make it possible for others to deal with life frankly at first hand, and their service to humanity is not to be estimated by considering the logical soundness of their views.

The dogma of non-resistance, with all its corollaries, is but one expression of the individualistic creed. Obviously, the dignity of the individual requires freedom from external compulsion. The law must be obeyed, but must be accepted first from within. As individuals, women have, on principle, the same rights as men; and therefore the Woman's Rights movement is but one phase of an individualistic view of society. The social order may not demand from the individual his sovereignty over his own moral nature; and hence resulted Garrison's no-government ideas. Espe-

cially in the most intimate realm of the inner life, in the religious life, the soul must come freely face to face with its Maker, it must weave its own garment, must be incarnate in its own body of forms, taking to itself that which is natural to it. From these conceptions follow the mystic idea of the Church, the lightness with which ties of denominational association bound Garrison, his disregard of form, his insistence on spiritual realities as the only religious facts of consequence. The moral life was lived by him from within outward. Garrison was, moreover, a man of action. Ideas interested him only as principles by which men were moved to deeds. So he judged institutions by their fruits in the conduct of their individual members. The Church and the state were worthy of reverence only so far as they contributed to justice and right in the life of the believer and the citizen.

Those who felt that truth to their own natures required them to separate from corporate activities, whether of Church or state, were called by a special name,—"Come-Outers"—as having followed the apostolic precept: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. . . . Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate."[1] Unable to conquer the evil of a corrupt world, they at least did not share in its corruption. No matter whose hands were soiled, theirs were clean. Such was Garrison's separation from his country. As a protest, this, like a hunger-strike or hara-kiri, was doubtless impressive, even valuable in its influence;

[1] 2 Cor. 6 : 14.

as a philosophy of life, it is folly. For if we consent to exist at all, we must at least accept the past; and how can we withdraw from sharing in the common life except by withdrawing from life altogether?

There was one manifestation of the individualistic spirit with which Garrison felt no sympathy,—"No-organization." Some of the tender consciences of the time found themselves unable to subscribe to the conditions of any coöperation at all. They could not endure the tyranny of committees, presiding officers, and parliamentary procedure. One may at least congratulate them if he cannot approve them. Dr. Johnson somewhere reckons up a formidable and impressive list of the things like sickness and sleep and petty business, which shorten life by wasting time and impairing strength. He did not know committee meetings. At the Chardon Street Convention, some, like Bronson Alcott, desired the meetings to be conducted without formal organization of any kind, and Emerson records as one of the advantages derived from the convention, "the attitude taken by individuals of their number of resistance to the insane routine of parliamentary usage."[1] This spirit now threatened the organized abolition movement. Some of the most devoted Abolitionists, among them Garrison's attached friend, N. P. Rogers, held that it was obligatory on them to reject all propaganda except moral and spiritual forces, and that they must not be bound by any systematic organization whatever.

[1] Emerson, *Works*, Centenary edition, Vol. X, p. 376.

Alarmed by this tendency, Garrison in April, 1841, framed resolutions passed by the Middlesex Anti-Slavery Society, to the effect that "if 'new organization' be in direct opposition to the genius of the anti-slavery enterprise, *no*-organization (as now advocated in certain quarters) would be still more unphilosophical and pernicious in its tendencies."

Still others among the reforming spirits of that age were striving to create a new economic rank. To this end some strove to combine freedom with coöperation by establishing communities. Brook Farm was set in action by George Ripley in 1840–1841. A few months later followed the community at Hopedale, under the moral inspiration of the Rev. Adin Ballou. In 1842, the community at Northampton, Mass., came into existence. It had no denominational connections. This Northampton "Association of Education and Industry" was of special interest to Garrison, for it was organized by men whom he pronounced to be "among the freest and best spirits of the age." One of them was his brother-in-law, George W. Benson. Still, kindly as he regarded this, as other movements for the amelioration of the lot of mankind, he was not sanguine, speaking of the organization of communities in a slightly satiric tone as a "new species of colonization."

In truth, Garrison never exhibited the least sympathy with efforts to reform the relations of employer and employed under the régime of unrestricted competition. He was indeed solicitous lest such movements should weaken the attack

upon slavery. Thus, when in England, he combated the idea that a single workman there, however oppressed, was a slave. He was cold to the communities. He took no interest in the land laws which, as Professor Commons has made clear, were primarily intended to relieve the labor market of the East, and which by creating the free-soil population, in time upset the old balance of the sections and destroyed slavery. And even after the final victory of his cause, he scorned the labor movements, and declared that if working men would throw off the worst tyranny under which they suffered, the slavery of their own appetites, they need not fear subjection to the yoke of an employer.

After the secession of 1839, the state of the American Anti-Slavery Society was such that its funds would not support lecturers while yet to maintain it the most active agitation was necessary. The offense taken at Garrison's many heresies and the charges actively disseminated against him made him the more responsible for the support of the society, and he therefore became very active in the lecture field. From among the irreconcilables, a small band of devoted supporters came to his assistance.

The conditions of the time made it natural for the fulminations against the Church and clergy to be especially severe. During the year 1841–1842 the record of the national denominations was, from an abolitionist point of view, particularly black, and abolitionist resolutions and speeches were of ex-

cessive violence. Garrison's denunciations, though harsh, were not in bad taste. He declared, for example, in the New England Anti-Slavery Convention of May, 1841, that "in regard to the existence of slavery, . . . the clergy stand wickedly preëminent, and ought to be unsparingly exposed and reproved before the people"; but others wished to assert by resolution, "That the Church and clergy of the United States, as a whole, constitute a great BROTHERHOOD OF THIEVES, inasmuch as they countenance the highest kind of theft, *i. e.*, man-stealing." Among those prominent in the debate on these resolutions were naturally Garrison's associates on the platform. The stand they took on this occasion was characteristic of all their utterances. Only one, C. C. Burleigh, was in favor of the more restrained form proposed by Garrison. Parker Pillsbury, N. P. Rogers, and Stephen S. Foster urged the convention to accept the more violent words of the second resolution, which had been offered by H. C. Wright. Abby Kelley, who was another active lecturer at this time, presented to the tenth anniversary meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society resolutions, "That the sectarian organizations called churches are combinations of thieves, robbers, adulterers, pirates, and murderers, and as such form the bulwark of American slavery."

Pillsbury, Foster, Miss Kelley, and Burleigh constituted with Garrison the color-guard of the anti-slavery lecturers of this year. They were all persons of marked and picturesque character.

Parker Pillsbury was the ninth of thirteen children in the family of a poor New Hampshire farmer. By sacrificial effort he succeeded in obtaining a theological education, and was in attendance at the Andover Seminary when he took up the abolitionist cause. Being warned by the faculty that if he persisted in addressing abolitionist meetings he need not expect to be recommended to a parish, he unhesitatingly threw in his lot with the reformers, and sacrificed his worldly future.[1] He was a man of direct and vigorous speech, and his portrait represents him as intent and earnest, but in no wise hard or obstinate. In all the gallery of the anti-slavery apostles, there is no more manly or attractive countenance than his.

Stephen S. Foster,[2] like Pillsbury, had made his way up from humble circumstances. Though born in 1809, he did not graduate from college until 1838, when he received his degree from Dartmouth. He then went to the Union Theological Seminary, but abandoned his preparation for the ministry to take up the lot of the reformer in 1840. Not more resolute than Pillsbury, he was much more sensational and irritating to his adversaries. He made a practice of interrupting religious meetings to give his testimony for freedom, and being a steadfast non-resistant, bore with irritating meekness the assaults from minister, elder, or deacon to which he was in consequence subjected. He was

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 181 *n.*; Pillsbury, *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles*, p. 85.

[2] *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles*, pp. 123–147, 186.

several times in jail, and had more power than any other anti-slavery lecturer to bring on a shower of rotten eggs and brickbats. His method of stirring up his audience is made very clear by his favorite assertion, that the Methodist Church was worse than any brothel in New York. A scraggy beard grew about his eager, intellectual face, and gave it a look of wildness. His wide, thin lips were compressed and shut together in a straight line. Across his chin there was a wrinkle, as if he held his face habitually in a scornful and truculent expression, and he looked as if he were always ready to jump at an enemy. Yet withal his was a fine and truthful soul.

Miss Abby Kelley, who afterward married Foster, followed the same plan of causing "the truth to make a sensation by making it sensational,"—to use Gail Hamilton's phrase. Her face, with its beautiful wide brow and sensitive lips, had much intellectual dignity and nobility, and no little sweetness, but her eyes shone with the undue brightness, and her face was worn with the undue intensity, which bore witness to the sacrifice of poise and self-control in most of this interesting company. In the later and increasingly bitter years of Abolitionism a spirit of acerbity grew upon her.

Both Pillsbury and Foster were bearded, in opposition to the fashion of the day, but their hair and beards, though not conventionally elegant, were as nothing compared with the flowing, sandy beard and untrimmed chevelure of C. C. Burleigh. His nose, slightly curved downward at the end, and his long,

curling hair and beard gave him a Jewish look. As his expression was singularly mild, the jibe of the Rynders mob, "Shave that tall Christ, and make a wig for Garrison," had its small share of vulgar wit. Burleigh was unquestionably the ablest debater among the Abolitionists, being fluent, intense, logical, and clear; but he was not their most impressive orator, because he lacked condensation and the massive weight of Garrison, as well as the imagination and other gifts of Phillips.

Burleigh had long been active in the anti-slavery cause. The other three had more lately joined the ranks. In his "Letter from Boston" about the Anti-Slavery Fair in 1846, Lowell describes them in witty and telling verse, which in spite of its length, is here, as by the Garrisons, given without apology, to revive a vivid epitome of men and days fast passing from the American memory.[1] The letter is addressed to James Miller McKim, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman:*

"Beyond, a crater in each eye,
Sways brown, broad-shouldered Pillsbury,
Who tears up words like trees by the roots,
A Theseus in stout cowhide boots,
The wager of eternal war
Against that loathsome Minotaur
To whom we sacrifice each year
The best blood of our Athens here,
(Dear M., pray brush up your Lempriere.)
A terrible denouncer he,

[1] The text, however, follows Lowell's revision in the 1891 edition of his poems.

Old Sinai burns unquenchably
Upon his lips; he might well be a
Hot-blazing soul from fierce Judea,
Habakkuk, Ezra, or Hosea.
His words are red hot iron searers,
And nightmare-like he mounts his hearers,
Spurring them like avenging Fate, or
As Waterton[1] his alligator.

"Hard by, as calm as summer even,
Smiles the reviled and pelted Stephen,
The unappeasable Boanerges
To all the Churches and the Clergies,
The grim *savant* who, to complete
His own peculiar cabinet,
Contrived to label 'mong his kicks
One from the followers of Hicks;[2]
Who studied mineralogy
Not with soft book upon the knee,
But learned the properties of stones
By contact sharp of flesh and bones,
And made the *experimentum crucis*
With his own body's vital juices;
A man with caoutchouc endurance,
A perfect gem for life insurance,
A kind of maddened John the Baptist,
To whom the harshest word comes aptest,
Who, struck by stone or brick ill-starred,
Hurls back an epithet as hard,
Which, deadlier than stone or brick,
Has a propensity to stick.
His oratory is like the scream
Of the iron horse's frenzied steam

[1] Charles Waterton, the naturalist, who tells of bestriding a gavial when he and his men captured it.

[2] The Hicksite Quakers, usually strong Abolitionists, and Non-Resistants; even from them Foster collected rebuffs.

Which warns the world to leave wide space
For the black engine's swerveless race.
Ye men with neckcloths white, I warn you—
Habet a whole haymow *in cornu.*

"A Judith, there, turned Quakeress,
Sits Abby in her modest dress,
Serving a table quietly,
As if that mild and downcast eye
Flashed never, with its scorn intense,
More than Medea's eloquence.
So the same force which shakes its dread
Far-blazing locks o'er Ætna's head,
Along the wires in silence fares
And messages of commerce bears.
No nobler gift of heart and brain,
No life more white from spot or stain,
Was e'er on Freedom's altar laid
Than hers, the simple Quaker maid.

"These last three (leaving in the lurch
Some other themes) assault the Church,
Who therefore writes them in her lists
As Satan's limbs and atheists;
For each sect has one argument
Whereby the rest to hell are sent.
* * * * * *
If the poor Church, by power enticed,
Finds none so infidel as Christ,
* * * * * *
What wonder World and Church should call
The true faith atheistical?"

But the most remarkable incident of Garrison's tours during the year 1841 was the addition of Frederick Douglass to the number of abolition lecturers. Douglass, a quadroon of ability and force of char-

acter, had made his escape from slavery three years before, and was living in New Bedford. Learning that Garrison was to speak in Nantucket, he attended the meeting, and was invited by a gentleman who had heard him address a company of colored people to support the affirmations of the reformers by his testimony. He describes himself as stammering, trembling, and halting in speech, as he told the story of his own life and adventures. The testimony of others is to the effect that he spoke with power and eloquence. The audience, previously calm, were thrilled through and through with this living proof of the nature of slavery. Garrison rose to speak, very quiet, very serene, his whole being possessed with the transcendent importance of his mission. The contrast between the young colored man, with his great bush of hair and his tawny, leonine beauty, and Garrison, spare of flesh, the light shining on the ivory of his now bald head, his brown eyes enkindled, and his face expressing at once his calm benevolence and the deep surge of feeling stirring him like a quiet but overpowering tide, makes this scene dramatic. When Garrison said: "Have we been listening to a man or a thing?" the effect was like that of an electric shock. It is not strange that as Garrison, with the full power of his voice but without the loss of that dignity always attending the fixed poise of his nature, shouted, "Shall such a man be sent back to slavery from the soil of old Massachusetts?" "almost the whole assembly," in the words of Parker Pillsbury, an eye-witness of the incident, "sprang with one ac-

cord to their feet, and the walls and roof of the Athenæum seemed to shudder with the 'No, no!' loud and long-continued in the wild enthusiasm of the scene." [1]

Mr. Garrison's sons tell us that their father did not remember his past vividly; but in the recollection of one journey taken late in the summer of 1841 he found an ever-present source of joy. This was an excursion, mainly for pleasure, into the White Mountains, in the company of N. P. Rogers. Rogers was a man of lively temperament, widely read and pleasantly humorous. Garrison and he had been much together in Europe, and had come to feel a sincere affection for each other. Rogers had been the editor of the *Standard*, the organ of the national society, and had just been appointed to the editorship of the *Herald of Freedom*, the organ of the New Hampshire society. In August, when relieved of his duties as editor of the *Standard*, he offered to fulfil a promise made while the two were gazing at one of the most famous scenes in Scotland: that he would show Garrison scenery in New Hampshire of a more massive and sublime character than anything before them. The two accordingly went on an excursion into the White Mountains.

A railroad ran from Boston to Nashua, N. H., forty miles; the travelers drove the rest of the way. "Blessings on the head that projected, on the hands that executed, the railroad mode of conveyance!" ejaculates Garrison. "It is superior to

[1] *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles*, p. 328.

eulogy. . . . Time and space seem almost annihilated."[1] They had traveled these forty miles in two hours! Their drive took them along the whole course of the Merrimac River, near the mouth of which, at Newburyport, was the birthplace of Garrison, and near the head, at Plymouth, N. H., that of Rogers. They ascended the Merrimac valley to Plymouth, thence crossed to Littleton, climbed Mount Washington from the west, and came home by way of the Crawford Notch. The journey through the mountains occupied a week, from August 23d to August 30th. Along the way abolition meetings were held, in most cases against the opposition of the clergy, and sometimes, because of ministerial unfriendliness, in the open air. The journey was one of innocent hilarity, enlivened by much singing. Garrison's ear was true, and he was fond of melody; and one song taught him by Rogers,—"In the days when we went gypsying,"—became more than a favorite with him. Often when Mrs. Garrison became depressed and anxious about paying the monthly bills, her husband used to put his arm about her, and walk up and down the room singing this song, until the cloud lifted.

In the lively account of the journey, printed by Rogers in the paper that he now went to edit, appears the following graceful narrative of an incident which presents the abolitionist character with quaint vividness, and which may serve to explain, if explanation be needed, why the numbers of the Abolitionists increased no more rapidly. "As we

[1] *Liberator*, Vol. XI, p. 147.

rode through the [Franconia] Notch after friends [Thomas Parnell] Beach and [Ezekiel] Rogers, we were alarmed at seeing *smoke* issue from their chaise-top, and cried out to them that their chaise was afire! We were more than suspicious, however, that it was something worse than that, and that the *smoke* came out of friend Rogers's mouth. And it so turned out. This was before we reached the Notch tavern. Alighting there to water our beasts, we gave him, all round, a faithful admonition. For anti-slavery does not fail to spend its intervals of public service in mutual and searching corrections of the faults of its friends. We gave it soundly to friend Rogers—that he, an abolitionist, on his way to an anti-slavery convention, should desecrate his anti-slavery mouth and that glorious Mountain Notch with a stupefying tobacco weed. We had halted at the Iron Works tavern to refresh our horses, and, while they were eating, walked to view the Furnace. As we crossed the little bridge, friend Rogers took out another cigar, as if to light it when we should reach the fire. 'Is it any malady you have got, Brother Rogers,' said we to him, 'that you smoke that thing, or is it habit and indulgence merely?' 'It is nothing but habit,' said he gravely, 'or, I would say, it *was* nothing else,' and he significantly cast the little roll over the railing into the Ammonoosuck. 'A revolution!' exclaimed Garrison, 'a glorious revolution without noise or *smoke*,' and he swung his hat cheerily about his head."[1]

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 22.

When Garrison returned to his desk, he found the recurring anxiety as to the finances of the *Liberator* waiting for him. The receipts for the year were five hundred dollars less than the expenses, many subscribers having stopped the paper because of Garrison's part in the Sabbath Convention. In addition, there came a painful difference with Isaac Knapp. A virulent attack was made through him upon Garrison. Knapp's unsystematic business habits and his dissipation had, it will be remembered, obliged a separation in 1839; and after that Knapp, instead of retrieving himself, had gone a downward road, spending his time in idleness, drink, and gambling. Garrison collected between thirty and forty dollars for Knapp from friends at a distance who were willing to trust the poor fellow's promises; but the assistance was thrown away. The arrangement made in 1839 was to last until January 1, 1842. In the meantime Knapp failed in business, and his share in the *Liberator*, which was part of his assets, had been bought from the creditors by E. G. Loring. Late in 1841, Knapp endeavored to regain his share in the publication of the paper, but was naturally unable to do so. On December 6th, he issued a circular giving his version of the affair, and declaring that he had been deprived by "treachery and duplicity" of his interest in the paper. He told how he had been denied employment on the *Liberator* when in actual want. To prove "that however many inferior causes have been at work, the great and overshadowing reason why there has been so much di-

vision and mutual alienation in the anti-slavery ranks, has been the selfish and deceptive conduct of Mr. Garrison and others at his elbows," Knapp designed to start "the true *Liberator*," to be called *Knapp's Liberator*, which should be printed as often as "there may be a call for it."

The associates and supporters of Knapp were persons very close to the centre of anti-slavery agitation;—John Cutts Smith, formerly John Smith Cutts, one of the original members of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and Hamlett Bates and Joel Prentiss Bishop, clerks in the anti-slavery society office, the latter of whom, after attacking Collins's office accounts, had associated himself with the "New Organization." Bishop is well known as the author of several important legal treatises, and his seems to have been the ablest and the directing mind. The one number of *Knapp's Liberator*, bearing date of January 8, 1842, contained Bishop's charges, Knapp's circular with corroborations, and anonymous attacks on Garrison and the board. The document was widely disseminated in England, and was thought by Garrison to be so artfully drawn as to be dangerous.

The *Liberator* made no direct reference either to the circular or to *Knapp's Liberator*, but the facts of the transfer of Knapp's share in the paper were succinctly stated by the financial committee.

CHAPTER X

THE ANTI-SLAVERY DISUNION SENTIMENT

When Garrison had just suffered the violence of the Boston mob, and when the protection of the state had been denied to free speech on the subject of slavery, he could still say, "We are not hostile to the Constitution of the United States." Six years later, in 1841, he denounced the Constitution and called on the North to withdraw from the Union. He was still not quite ready to offer disunion as a program; yet such a program was necessary to meet the Liberty party with its definite platform and its distinct war-cry, and in February, 1842, he announced it. Toward the end of April, he at last declared in the *Liberator* that the time had come to assert "the duty of making the Repeal of the Union between the North and the South the grand rallying-point until it be accomplished, or slavery cease to pollute our soil. We are for throwing all the means, energies, actions, purposes, and appliances of the genuine friends of liberty and republicanism into this one channel, and of measuring the humanity, patriotism, and piety of every man by this one standard."

The utterance of these views caused the pro-Southern papers of New York to threaten and in a more or less open manner to incite the mobbing of the Anti-Slavery Convention which was to be

held in that city. Moreover, it brought forth from the executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society a disavowal, in the form of a circular to the press of New York, which not only declared the dissolution of the Union to be an object "entirely foreign to the purpose for which the society was organized," but condemned the attempt to bring it about on moral grounds. Deeply moved by this opposition from within, Garrison replied with the fearful words of Isaiah, which he afterward used as a motto in the *Liberator*. Speaking for himself alone, he said: "The message of the prophet to the people in Jerusalem [Isaiah 28: 14–18] describes the exact character of our 'republican' compact. . . . Slavery is a combination of DEATH and HELL, and with it the North have made a covenant and are at agreement. As an element of the government it is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. As a component part of the Union, it is necessarily a national interest. Divorced from Northern protection, it dies; with that protection, it enlarges its boundaries, multiplies its victims, and extends its ravages." [1]

The anniversary meetings of the American Anti-Slavery Society were not representative assemblages, but conventions of as many Abolitionists from all parts of the country as could and would

[1] It seems to have been a treasured belief with Garrison that the use of italics and capital letters for emphasis helped to kindle a fervor in the reader's mind. This usage has served to make the appearance of some of his printed matter unsightly to modern eyes, however effective it may have been with contemporary minds.

spare time and money to travel to the appointed place. Obviously, there would tend to gather at the meetings a large proportion of the most enthusiastic part of the membership, expansive, radiant, and eager. The exciting speeches, the sense of power and importance due to concentrated numbers, accentuated the radical tendencies of the members present, and hence the root-and-branch policies of Garrison had always a certain advantage before this body. Though the formal approval of a course of action by the American Anti-Slavery Society had no authoritative relation to the Abolitionists as a whole, it was of decided value. A policy thus endorsed stood before non-Abolitionists as the general sentiment of the Abolitionist body, when in point of fact the stay-at-home Abolitionists, necessarily the greater number, might be far indeed from accepting the declarations made at New York. It will be remembered that at the meeting in 1839 the society had been purged of the less idealistic and radical part of its membership, and afterward consisted almost entirely of inexorable "foes to compromise."

It was before this purified assembly, the "Old Organization," that Garrison's declaration was to be brought. To avoid even the semblance of exercising a dictatorial influence, Garrison decided not to be present, although he "regretted to be absent on account of the stormy aspect of things, created by the diabolism of the New York daily press."

During the convention, the debate proved that the majority of the members, led by Henry C.

Wright, Edmund Quincy, Abby Kelley, and Wendell Phillips, the ablest and most consistent of the radical wing of the radical Abolitionists, were in favor of Garrison's propositions; but it was thought best to let the meeting pass without pressing for a direct vote. The same policy was followed throughout the year, the minds of Abolitionists being familiarized with the disunion idea by the introduction at local meetings of resolutions in favor of separation, usually discussed and laid on the table. Garrison himself, on May 12, 1842, put his doctrine at the head of his editorial columns, where he kept it for the rest of the year:

"A Repeal of the Union Between Northern Liberty and Southern Slavery is Essential to the Abolition of the One and the Preservation of the Other."

Sooner or later the mere ripening of Garrison's own logic must have brought his mind to the views which he adopted somewhat earlier on account of the denial of the right to petition, the refusal of the right to free speech, and the violence done to the comity of the states by the South. He saw in the Constitution of the United States an agreement to protect slavery. That the agreement was made at a time when its importance was not foreseen, and when the hope was confidently and not unreasonably held, both in the North and in the South, that slavery would disappear of itself, were in his mind no palliations for the bargain. The existence of the Constitution depended upon an agreement guaranteeing the rights of the slaveholder. This, in his

view, was an immoral contract, and the whole compact was void on account of it. Between Garrison's and Calhoun's reasoning there was no point of difference except the radical opposition on the fundamental matter of the righteousness of slavery. To Garrison slavery was wicked, the Constitution was formed and founded on the support of wickedness, and therefore was *ab initio* of no force and effect. There was no place in his mind for vague feelings of affection for national unity. To him as to all radical reformers every moral idea was the result of a plain process of inference from immutable general principles, and was applicable, without shades or modifications or exceptions, in all fields of moral activity. From such a point of view there is no answer to his conclusions. If a nation can be formed by bond and agreement, Garrison was right; and the only sound answer to his arguments is to be found in recognizing that the United States is a nation like other nations, the existence of which is due to deeper forces than paper agreements and contracts between states.

To Garrison the year 1842 must have been one of precious memories. Then first he reached intellectual consistency, and delivered to the world his final message of importance. He had purged his soul of complicity with guilt, and was blest with an inward security and peace even greater than he had felt in previous years. In his outer life, the year was full of action and still more of bereavement and suffering. In January his wife's sister, Mary Benson, had died under his roof, and he had

spoken at her funeral such words of moral inspiration as seemed to him appropriate. In October his only brother, James H. Garrison, a victim of intemperance and of the savage ferocity with which seamen were then treated, both in the merchant marine and the navy, had come to the end of his wretched life, likewise in Garrison's house, whither he had crept as to a last refuge. In the remorse following a debauch, in 1841, he laid plans to take his own life. Prevented from executing his purpose, he found an asylum during the brief remainder of his days at his brother's house. When his body was committed to the ground, his brother arranged that the funeral should be as "plain, simple, and free as possible," and that "liberty of speech" should be granted to all who should attend. Garrison himself frankly drew from James's life the lessons against war and intemperance which his unhappy brother's career had helped to teach him. The Garrisons have told this narrative of a wrecked life with naked sincerity, but have not neglected an opportunity to portray the evils of our old naval system. Theirs is the unfaltering patriotism which smites to heal and spares not.

Besides performing his manifold duties on the *Liberator* and discharging his obligations as kinsman, Garrison was busy lecturing all summer, going in July to Cape Cod, and afterward to Maine and New Hampshire. In November he for the first time visited "the West,"—that is, central and western New York. The journey was undertaken to meet the inroads of the "New Organization" and

the Liberty party on the "Old Organization." The members of the Liberty party had promptly striven to rid themselves of the odium attaching to Garrison's disunion sentiments by expressing their devotion to the Union and the Constitution. Salmon P. Chase, the Ohio leader of the party, addressed a letter to its convention, soon after assembled in Syracuse, in which he contrasted the political with the "come-outer" Abolitionists, and expressed the conviction that the Constitution was opposed to slavery, which it condemned and localized, and did not support. Other members of the party, among them William Goodell and Charles T. Torrey, directly attacked the American Anti-Slavery Society on the ground that by failing to support independent political action, it had become a mere annex to the old parties. Some of the most vigorous lecturers of the Old Organization, particularly Garrison, Abby Kelley, and S. S. Foster, were accordingly sent to the region where the Liberty party was strongest, and where the convention had just been held. At Syracuse, Foster's violent abuse and Garrison's stern condemnation of the Church and clergy provoked disturbances approaching a riot. Rotten eggs were thrown, benches were broken, and the opponents of abolition took possession of the meeting. Threats of tarring and feathering the two men were freely made, but were not carried out. At Utica the beginnings of disorder were quelled by the firmness of the mayor. The exposure and strenuous exertion of the journey caused Garrison to take cold; and coming home with his system de-

bilitated, he was immediately seized by the contagion of scarlet fever, then raging in his household. There was a babe of a few months to be cared for,—Charles Follen Garrison, born September 9th,—and Mrs. Garrison herself had been seriously ill with rheumatism. The attack from which Garrison suffered was very severe. "He has been as ill," a friend wrote, "as a man can be and live."

Toward the end of January, 1843, he returned to his desk with his health still frail, and throughout the year suffered much distress from a swelling in the left side, which never afterward left him. The cause, not certainly known during his life, was after his death ascertained to be an enlargement of the spleen.

He had now reached the final phrasing of his disunion doctrines. The less vigorous language at the head of the editorial columns of the *Liberator* was replaced by a resolution of his passed by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society at its annual meeting in January, 1843: "Resolved, That the compact which exists between the North and the South is 'a covenant with death and an agreement with hell'—involving both parties in atrocious criminality—and should be annulled." The time was not even yet ripe for a decisive vote by the American Society, which at its May meeting laid on the table a resolution of Garrison's making the repudiation of the Constitution a test of consistent Abolitionism. The general sympathy of the meeting with Garrison's views is shown by the fact that although the resolutions were not voted, he was elected president for the ensuing year.

The election of Garrison at this time was more than a declaration of principles; it was nailing the colors to the mast of a gallant but crippled vessel, over the sinking of which its enemies were already exulting. The weakness of the Old Organization had become so manifest that the leaders of the new had coolly proposed a union meeting at the 1843 anniversary; and Leavitt, the editor of the *Emancipator*, had affirmed that to maintain the society in existence would probably require the assistance of the committee which had rebelled against Garrison's ascendency. Even the strongest and firmest leaders of the American Anti-Slavery Society proposed to abandon the annual meeting in New York as an unnecessary expense, and to transfer the headquarters to Boston; and only the flat refusal of the Boston members of the executive committee deprived the enemies of the society of this opportunity to triumph.

A letter from Edmund Quincy to the Irish abolitionist Richard D. Webb gives a quaint and vivid picture of Garrison as presiding officer: "Garrison makes an excellent president at a public meeting where the order of speakers is in some measure arranged, as he has great felicity in introducing and interlocuting remarks; but at a meeting for debate he does not answer so well, as he is rather apt, with all the innocence and simplicity in the world, to do all the talking himself. This, however, we shall arrange by having Francis Jackson to act as V. P. on such occasions."

During the year 1843 Garrison's private affairs

were in such a condition that without the strength given him by his devotion to a single great object he would have become a prey to paralyzing anxiety. His health continued so poor that in June and July he was obliged to go for rest and recuperation to the Northampton Community. "He went there for rest," laughed Edmund Quincy, "and the way he rests himself is to lecture every night in the neighboring towns, and on Sundays in Northampton in the open air!" During his vacation he took a long drive up and down the Connecticut Valley with his wife and his old friend N. P. Rogers, his companion in the journey through the White Mountains. He insisted on exhibiting his skill as a driver, and was so maladroit as to overturn the carriage while crossing a stream. His wife and child were almost drowned, but escaped with no more serious results than the dislocation of Mrs. Garrison's wrist. The injured member was treated, with temporary success, but was so weakened by the accident that it gave way upon a second injury, becoming permanently lame.

When Garrison went back from Northampton to his work, he rented a new house at No. 13 Pine Street, Boston, where he made his home until 1850. The receipts from the *Liberator* had fallen so low that at times he had to borrow money from his friends to pay his ordinary domestic expenses. The reasons for the small circulation of the *Liberator* were primarily public apathy and the factions within the Abolitionist body; yet the physical weakness of Garrison and his constitu-

tional procrastination had laid the conduct of the paper open to criticism. His good friends, Edmund Quincy and Maria W. Chapman, had as much as possible relieved him of his duties as editor during his long lecture tours and his illness; and Quincy, on yielding up his responsibility, remonstrated with Garrison in the kindest and frankest manner. He criticized the careless and hasty make-up of the paper, the frequent absence of editorials, and the negligence displayed in some of those that did appear, and urged Garrison to do his work more systematically. As his sons say in their biography of their father,[1] "The volume of matter, in manuscript and in print, relating to the cause was growing with tremendous rapidity. As a rule, besides reading proof, Garrison shared in the mechanical work of the paper. Add the interruptions to which he was exposed as the leader of the Abolitionists; his lecture engagements; his anti-slavery hospitality; his constant anxiety concerning his means of support, and the wonder is that he found leisure to write as much as he did, whether for the *Liberator*, the Massachusetts Board, the American Society, or in his own private correspondence."

In January, 1844, the agitation begun in 1841 was continued; and finally, at the May meeting of the American Society in New York, a large majority adopted not only an expression of disunion principles from the pen of Garrison, but a much more violent resolution introduced by Wendell Phillips;—"The only exodus of the slave to

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 87.

freedom, unless it be one of blood, must be over the ruins of the present American Church and the grave of the present Union."

Weighty protests against the passage of the resolutions had been made by leading and devoted Abolitionists, especially by those of legal and practical experience, among them Ellis Gray Loring, David Lee Child, William A. White, Arnold Buffum, and James Miller McKim, later one of the founders of the *Nation* and the father of Wendell Phillips Garrison's first wife. The opposition was renewed at the New England Anti-Slavery Convention held later in the same month. The impression produced on Edmund Quincy by the debates at the New England meeting is presented with his usual vivacity:

"The debates were very fine. . . . But in fact there was but one side. The arguments in favor of acting under the existing government, or, rather, the casuistry by which swearing to do wicked things which at the time you don't mean to do was justified, were enough to convince any reasonable person of the truth of what they opposed. [The Rev. John] Pierpont's speech was the most extraordinary piece of Jesuitism that I ever heard. The world's people among the audience were shocked at it. An old president of a bank, no Abolitionist, who was in from curiosity, told me that the business of the world could not go on for a day on his principles, if fairly carried out; that they struck at the root of all human society, and would destroy all confidence of man in man. And

yet this is the only process by which he can reconcile his support of the Liberty party with morality. The vote surprised us all. At one time we thought it might not pass. Latterly we thought it would be carried by a small majority. But when the roll was called, it seemed as if there were no 'nays' at all, they came dropping in at such distant intervals. The vote stood 250 to 24." [1]

Among the twenty-four nays were those of Maria White, William A. White's sister, and of his college friend and her betrothed, James Russell Lowell. The two young people,—"the glorious girl with the spirit eyes,"—Lowell's own words—and her lover, "slight and small, with rosy cheeks and starry eyes and wavy hair parted in the middle" (such is the picture of him drawn by Dr. E. E. Hale)—had listened with the ardor of pure, warm youth to the myriad voices of their time. Both had long held abolition principles, and within a few years each had formally entered the Anti-Slavery Society. Miss White and Lowell, under her influence, had also joined the "temperance movement." Both were genuine poets, though unequally gifted with the power of expression. Imaginative sympathy and a sense of history prevented them from being entirely in harmony with their associates. Miss White could see how the Abolitionists themselves were sacrificed to their philanthropic energy. "They do not modify their words and voices. They are like people who live with the deaf, and hear waterfalls, whose voices be-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 111.

come high and harsh." No matter how intense the anti-slavery spirit of Lowell and Miss White, they themselves would never become hardened or narrowed. They could have sentiments about their country, and love it with all its imperfections. As Lowell writes,[1] "I do not agree with the abolitionist leaders in their disunion and non-voting theories. . . . They treat ideas as ignorant persons do cherries. They think them unwholesome unless they are swallowed stones and all." Lowell soon after undertook the duties of editorial writer for several anti-slavery papers; and the contrast between his articles and Garrison's is a striking index to the characters of the two men. Garrison for thirty-five years kept sending in blows over his opponent's heart, and was ready at the end of every round to begin a new one in the old way, until his antagonist should be beaten down. Lowell, in his lightest papers, brings the matter *sub specie æternitatis*, and makes the literary spirit always felt by showing a certain detached interest in the situation, so that his papers may still be read with delight, something that cannot in all fairness be said of much that Garrison wrote, forceful and sound English as it mostly is. Such articles must at the time have been far less effective than Garrison's, as lacking deadly intensity and immediateness of purpose. Lowell's verses and wit must often have seemed to his associates mere "Delilahs of the imagination," seducing him from his more strenuous duties as a reformer. The "nays" of

[1] *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 125.

Maria White and James Russell Lowell were the response to the cry for disunion made by poetry and the imagination.

The agitation for the disunion declaration renewed the enthusiasm of the Old Organization; and in time the declaration was accepted in New England and the Middle States, which antedated the formation of the Union. The Western Abolitionists, inhabitants of states which were the offspring of the Union, and which had by Federal action been "dedicated to freedom," could not be brought to approve disunion. The Ohio society went formally on record as opposing any narrowing of the basis of the general abolitionist movement.

That body of "New Organization" Abolitionists who had formed the Liberty party had of course no interest in the discussion except as a justification of their policy, and as capital against their rivals, the "Old Organization." For the view held by many of them that the Constitution was essentially an anti-slavery document, Garrison had nothing but scorn. "The truth is," he wrote, "the misnamed Liberty party is under the control of as ambitious, unprincipled, and crafty leaders as is either the Whig or Democratic party; and no other proof of this assertion is needed than their unblushing denial of the great object of the national compact, namely, union at the sacrifice of the colored population of the United States. Their new interpretations of the Constitution are a bold rejection of the facts of history, and a gross insult to the intelligence of the age, and certainly never can be carried into

effect without dissolving the Union by provoking a civil war." [1] It is perhaps in the last words that the heart of Garrison's opposition to the Union is to be found. In prompt disunion he saw the only alternative to war as a means of escape from the absolute domination of the whole country by slavery; and war he was bound by his principles to do his utmost to prevent. In this contest he had the better of the logic, for both sides rested on the "false bottom of American political thinking," the Constitution; but the truth and the future were with his opponents. His function was to stir and awaken the slumbering conscience of the people. The men whom he scorned and reprobated had likewise a work to do in giving practical form to the indistinct demands, hardly more than sentiments, of the North.

The success of the disunion propaganda added no new members to the abolition societies. The earlier contest followed by the great schism, it might seem, would have driven out all but the most uncompromising idealists, yet the mooting of the new question decimated even this Gideon's troop. Argue as Garrison might to show that the adoption of the disunion declaration was a mere majority vote, the passage of the declaration made the acceptance of the disunion idea in fact a test, a touchstone, of thoroughgoing Abolitionism. There were few Americans who could bear to hear the words of Wendell Phillips, when the crowd in Faneuil Hall howled down the speakers at a meeting called in

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 116.

1842 to protest against the return of the fugitive slave Latimer: "When I look at these crowded thousands, and see them trample on their consciences and the rights of their fellow men at the bidding of a piece of parchment, I say, my CURSE be on the Constitution of the United States."

It is probable that criticism of Garrison's disunion sentiments will outlast all other objections to his marvelous career—to his "infidelity," his commination of the clergy and of reputable men with whom he did not agree, his peace and non-resistant views. His preachment of disunion and his hatred of the Constitution were proofs, so it has been and will continue to be said, of disloyalty to his native land, even then with all its limitations and faults no mean country, of which he was in the usual acceptance of the word, a citizen, receiving its protection and sharing its undoubted blessings. It must be said, without hope, however, of definitely disposing in some minds of the charge, that Garrison really saw no other way out of the difficulty confronting a determined South and a very undetermined North. He did not believe and repeatedly said that he did not believe that the South would secede.

The shot that boomed sullenly over Charleston harbor on that April day in 1861, calling on the United States of America to surrender its own property to a seceded portion of it, was as great and as genuine a surprise to William Lloyd Garrison as to every other inhabitant of the Northern states. Well might he now claim that the Union was dissolved,

in fact if not in theory. Out of this dissolution arose a new union of states, and to this Union he could and did adhere to the extent of supporting, without subserviency, the Republican party after its period of decline had set in. Another surprise in store for him was the immediate rally of vast numbers of the Democratic party to the aid of this now dismembered Union. He could not have foreseen such an event. So far as he could gaze into the future he saw only an *impasse*—a union to be continued only with slavery—and this he could not support. If this be treason then his hostile critics will have to make the most of it for all time to come.

Garrison at this period had other subjects of thought than disunion. The year 1844 saw the political campaign ending in Polk's election. In that year the question of the annexation of Texas was before the American people ; and a multitude of topics connected with public policy called for discussion in the *Liberator*. Then took place the acts of extraordinary violence offered to the learned and upright commissioner, Samuel Hoar, when he went to Charleston to collect evidence preparatory to a trial before the Federal court for the purpose of establishing the rights of Massachusetts seamen of color in South Carolina. In the same year the Rev. Charles T. Torrey was imprisoned in Baltimore for activity on behalf of the slave. Garrison sent such aid in money to his old opponent as he could afford, and strove to excite public detestation of his imprisonment. Torrey gratefully acknowledged Gar-

rison's magnanimity, and in a letter to a friend practically expressed repentance for his earlier course in contributing to the establishment of the New Organization. But the incident which caused Garrison most concern in this year was a painful difficulty with his old friend Rogers, in whose comradeship he had taken such joy. Rogers was an extreme "no-organizationist." A president, a board, or an executive committee was feared by him little less, and abhorred with no more allowance, than a politician or a slaveholder. A contest arose as to the title to the *Herald of Freedom*, the New Hampshire anti-slavery paper, of which Rogers was then editor and his son-in-law, J. R. French, the printer. Both were opposed to the executive committee of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society. Garrison took the side of the committee, and Rogers never forgave him. In this year, finally, Garrison's heart was gladdened by the birth of a daughter, Helen Frances, following four sons. She became the wife of Henry Villard.

CHAPTER XI

TEXAS AND THE MEXICAN WAR

Among the first effects of the growing strength of anti-slavery sentiment among the people of the North was the energetic opposition to the annexation of Texas and the war with Mexico. The forces active in causing the annexation of Texas were by no means so simple as has often been represented. On the part of the leaders who planned and carried out the measure, it was a coldly devised and adroitly executed political act, intended to enlarge the area and increase the strength of slavery in the United States. Yet it was not, properly speaking, a "conspiracy," for the means would not have been condemned if the end were approved, and those who employed the means believed in the end. As regards the public support given to annexation, the real strength of the movement lay in an idea, a sentiment, of national greatness and unity, which looked toward bringing as large an area of territory as possible into the United States, and toward extending the country from ocean to ocean and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, thus making it the greatest and most powerful of all nations,—commercially self-sufficient, overwhelmingly mighty in population and wealth, a world in itself.

This idea was not created by reason, but by the much more powerful forces of imagination and

emotion. Texas, at the time of the renewal of the efforts to annex it, had achieved its independence of Mexico, was populated by Americans, and was in effect a sister state to Mississippi and Louisiana. There were genuine and not unnatural fears, zealously encouraged by the diplomacy of Texas, that European states would gain a preponderance in the new republic. If the sectional division between the slaveholding and the non-slaveholding states had not been in existence, there would have been no hesitation or delay in carrying out annexation ; and the sentiment of nationality, the vision of a vaster union, was sufficiently strong to quiet in the minds of a great proportion of the citizens of the North the vague and incoherent stirrings of their half-formed moral revulsion against slavery. Southern politicians, of course, were jubilant over the prospect of adding a new slave state as a make-weight against the advancing greatness of the Northwest. Nationalism was once more linked with slavery ; and once more, to the eyes of Abolitionists, the Constitution appeared as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell."

Nor did the prospect of annexing Texas fill with horror the professed Abolitionists alone. The legislature of Massachusetts voted that annexation would not be binding on the state,—a vote which, literally interpreted, was an expression of disunion principles. At meetings called by politicians to protest against annexation, Garrison was received with respect by men who would have mobbed him fifteen years earlier. The burden of his speeches

was his *Delenda est Carthago*,—"No union with slaveholders!" Charles Sumner bears interesting testimony to Garrison's power as an orator on one of these occasions. "He spoke with natural eloquence. Hillard spoke exquisitely. His words descended in a golden shower; but Garrison's fell in fiery rain. It seemed doubtful at one time if the Abolitionists would not succeed in carrying the convention." [1] In taking part in these meetings, Garrison was of course engaging in political activity; but since in point of fact he never really kept out of politics, and was now pursuing a line of conduct that involved no submission to the Constitution of the United States and that seemed to him to promise an escape from civil war, he is not properly chargeable with any real inconsistency for taking the course he followed. His efforts and those of the men with whom he was for the time associated were unsuccessful. Even in New England the national spirit in the end proved the stronger. In the West there was a lively enthusiasm for the addition to the power of the country which aversion to the extension of slave territory could not overcome. Finally, the annexation of Texas was consummated, shocking and discouraging all who shared in the anti-slavery movement.

During the summer and autumn of 1846 Garrison was again in the British Isles. The occasion of his going was a fierce agitation which followed the acceptance by the Free Church of Scotland of money subscribed by the evangelical churches of

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 137.

Charleston. The Free Church owed its origin to a belief in the right of the congregations to control the appointment of their own ministers, and it received aid from those all over the world who sympathized with that principle. As it happened, public sentiment in Great Britain, just at the time of the "ecumenical collection" for the benefit of the Free Church, had been outraged by the condemnation to death at Charleston of John L. Brown, a young northern white man, for aiding in the escape of a slave woman of mixed blood whom he loved and purposed to marry. The sentence was not executed, but the horror felt in England and Scotland did not abate. All over the latter country spread the excitement against taking the tainted money from Charleston. "Old Scotland boils like a pot," wrote back Frederick Douglass. Splashes of red paint typifying the slaves' blood staining the gift were daubed on walls and steps, and the whole town of Edinburgh was placarded with the words, "Send back the money!" The money, however, was kept as Garrison predicted that it would be. "The laity I believe would send it back, but the divinity prevents it."

Between the American Abolitionists and a large body of the English people there was a close bond. The imperial situation of Great Britain compelled its citizens to have regard to the treatment of dependent populations at a distance from the centre of government; and at least from the time of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, benevolently energetic men had always been ready to work upon

public opinion in behalf of those who, in their belief, were subjected to tyranny by "the man on the spot," and thus to bring the great weight of imperial power to bear upon those suspected of oppression. The abolition of the slave trade and the emancipation of the negroes in the West Indies had been effected by such philanthropists. English public opinion had come to detest slavery, and those alike who were stirred by an independent love of freedom and who drifted with the current of convention felt sympathy with the American Abolitionists, and respect for their leader. A number of Englishmen coöperated with him and aided his cause as much as possible,—often, it may be remarked, with a disregard for patriotic prepossessions which would not have been welcome to any one whose Americanism was less detached than Garrison's. Some of these English friends and admirers, especially George Thompson, urged the Emancipation Society to invite Garrison to visit England, and to be present at the Anti-Slavery Conference in London in August. The mild climate, the pleasant social relations, and the freedom from many anxieties which Garrison found in England always made a visit to that country beneficial to his health and spirits. Moreover, at the moment of receiving the invitation of his English friends, it seemed important to stigmatize the Free Church for fellowship with slaveholders, and to defend himself from the retaliatory charges of infidelity. A fund to pay his expenses was raised in America, and he set out in July. In England he

addressed several reform organizations, speaking with an asperity that irritated many of his hearers. He was active in establishing an Anti-Slavery League to coöperate with the American Anti-Slavery Society, and was "trotted about from meeting to meeting, in public and in private," visiting Ireland and canvassing Scotland twice. On the later journey throughout Scotland, the anti-slavery ladies of Edinburgh made him a present of a silver tea-service, on which he had to pay duty when he brought it home. About a month after his return occurred the reunion of the Abolitionists at the anti-slavery bazaar, which Lowell describes wittily in the composition in Hudibrastic verse from which the description of the three chief anti-clericals has already been quoted:

> "There's Garrison, his features very
> Benign for an incendiary,
> Beaming forth sunshine through his glasses
> On the surrounding lads and lasses,
> (No bee could blither be or brisker,)—
> A Pickwick somehow turned John Ziska,
> His bump of firmness swelling up
> Like a rye cupcake from its cup.
> And there, too, was his English tea-set,
> Which in his ear a kind of flea set,
> His Uncle Samuel for its beauty
> Demanding sixty dollars duty.
> ('Twas natural Sam should serve his trunk ill,
> For G., you know, has cut his uncle.)"

The rest of 1846 and the greater part of 1847 were spent by Garrison in the usual routine of his life,

writing editorials, lecturing, and attending conventions. He continued to denounce the annexation of Texas and the consequent war with Mexico, but instead of regarding the matter as he had at first, merely in the light of a triumph of diabolism, he saw some promise for the future in the aroused feeling of the North. He sustained the Wilmot Proviso, though without enthusiasm, disunion being the only genuinely effective policy in his opinion. Finally, he did not cease to urge his non-resistance and "come-outer" views of church and state, ever provoking and ever repelling charges of infidelity.

In August, 1847, he first crossed the Alleghanies, going at the invitation of the Western Anti-Slavery Society to address the convention at New Lyme, Ohio. His plan was to travel out through Pennsylvania and back through New York, and to deliver addresses on the way in both states. Ohio had in its history much to interest the Abolitionists. Liberty-loving New Englanders had begun the settlement of the Western Reserve, under the ordinance of 1787, which forbade slavery in the "Northwest." In Ohio, slavery was not as in New England, a monster of the mind, but a dread fact, in tangible existence across the river which formed its southern boundary. Hence the anti-slavery movement in the western state was more intense and picturesque than in New England. It had never sunk into such lethargy as had the eastern movement at the time when Garrison's activity began, but had continued in vigorous life with little dependence on him. On account of the geographical situation of the state,

it included some of the most active lines of the Underground Railroad. In Ohio the Church had exhibited a very unusual opposition to slavery. There Weld had led the secession from Lane Seminary, and there was Oberlin College. There were the political leaders, Chase, Morris, and Giddings. There, too, were the abolitionist clergymen, the eccentric but forceful Finney and the resolute and brilliant Mahan. In spite of Garrison's ill health, it would have been strange if he had not looked forward to the journey with pleasure.

The railroad from Philadelphia toward Pittsburg ended at Chambersburg, on the eastern slope of the mountains. Garrison's comments on his journey through Pennsylvania sound strange to the present day traveler who compares the experiences of a passage by the same line on the steel cars and over the smooth road-bed of the Pennsylvania Railroad, with those of the journey, say from Boston to Providence. He says, "Though the cars (compared with our Eastern ones) look as if they were made a century ago, and are quite uncomfortable, yet the ride was far from being irksome, on account of the all-pervading beauty and opulence of the country through which we passed." [1] The passenger cars of the time were constructed on the characteristic American plan, with a passageway down the middle; but the best of them were roughly built and uncomfortable. An English traveler calls them long wooden boxes.

Garrison's companion was Frederick Douglass,

[1] *Liberator*, Vol. XVII, p. 135.

who was subjected to frequent insult and sometimes to violence. When the travelers reached Chambersburg, they found that their tickets obliged them to separate, one going on a stage ahead of the other. The weather was very hot, and Garrison described the stage journey through the mountains as quite overpowering. It seemed to him almost interminable,—almost equal to the trip across the Atlantic. After the parting, Douglass was not permitted to sit at the eating table on the way, and for two days and nights scarcely tasted a morsel of food. The consequence was a condition of great debility, which prevented him from speaking with effect.

The audiences at most of the frequent meetings on the way were kindly disposed, except for occasional demonstrations against Douglass; and those at Norristown and Pittsburg were enthusiastic. On the other hand, at New Brighton, "a small village of eight hundred inhabitants, . . . the people generally remain incorrigible. . . . No place could be obtained for our meeting excepting the upper room of a large store, which was crowded to excess, afternoon and evening, several hundred persons being present, and many other persons not being able to obtain admittance. In the evening, there were some symptoms of pro-slavery rowdyism outside the building, but nothing beyond the yelling of young men and boys. Over our heads in the room, were piled up across the beams many barrels of flour; and while we were speaking, the mice were busy in nibbling at them, causing their contents to whiten some of our dresses, and think-

ing, perchance, that our speeches needed to be a little more *floury*" [1]—a pun so atrocious that it could have proceeded only from a man of kindly and simple nature, quite innocent of any sense of intellectual guilt.

The anniversary of the Western Anti-Slavery Society was held August 18–20. The accommodations of the village of New Lyme were inadequate for the expected concourse; and a tent had been set up, capable of holding an audience of four thousand. On the night after Garrison's arrival the tent collapsed, in a storm of wind and rain, into a huge water-soaked mass of canvas, and was put up again with great difficulty. The interest of the meeting centred in the debates between the Disunionists and the political Abolitionists. It is pleasant to observe with what warmth Garrison recognized the moral courage and the valuable service of the congressmen, Giddings and Tilden, opposed as he was on principle to their acceptance of the Constitution. The imported speakers, Garrison, Douglass, and Stephen S. Foster, were the leaders against the Union, while Giddings was its chief defender. Garrison wrote: "Mr. G[iddings] exhibited the utmost kindness and generosity toward us, and alluded to me in very handsome terms, as also to Douglass; but his arguments were very specious, and I think we had with us the understanding and conscience of an overwhelming majority of those who listened to the debate. As a large proportion of the Abolitionists in this section of the

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 194.

country belong to the Liberty party, we have had to bring them to the same test of judgment as the Whigs and the Democrats, for supporting a pro-slavery Constitution; but they are generally very candid, and incomparably more kind and friendly to us than those of their party at the East." [1]

The courtesy of Giddings was no doubt perfectly sincere; but its warmth may have been increased by the fact that Garrison was his unconscious political ally. The Western Reserve had been a home of the Liberty party; but with the evident political failure of the party, the way was open to the Garrisonian Abolitionists to proclaim their more radical doctrines. Abby Kelley and Foster had evangelized the region and had prepared the way for Garrison. Giddings at this time was striving desperately to hold to the Whigs, and proclaiming that the objects of the Abolitionists could best be reached without the new party. The argument of Garrison, as the recognized leader of radical Abolitionism, was a powerful though unintentional reinforcement to Giddings's position.

Garrison records the impression made upon him, as the dense mass of people moved off home at the close of the meeting, by the long array of vehicles, dispersing in every direction, some to go as far as a hundred miles. One old colored man rode on horseback three hundred miles to be present. The meeting over, the journey home began. Garrison was driven from town to town of the Western Re-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 197.

serve by local friends of the cause, speaking, several times in the large tent, to good audiences everywhere. The engagements made for him were so many that he had no time at all for rest. Douglass's weakness and sore throat continued for several days and served to increase the burden upon Garrison's shoulders. On the way, he had the satisfaction of visiting Oberlin. The institution interested him as an anti-slavery college, to the founding of which he had given a helpful word, and as an important station on the Underground Railroad. When he reached the college the graduation exercises of the theological seminary were taking place. "Two of the graduates took occasion to denounce 'the fanaticism of Come-outerism and Disunionism,' and to make a thrust at those who in the guise of anti-slavery, temperance, etc., are endeavoring to promote 'infidelity'! Prof. [Charles G.] Finney[1] in his address to the graduates, gave them some very good advice—telling them that denouncing Come-outerism, on the one hand, or talking about the importance of preserving harmony and union in the Church on the other, would avail them nothing. They must go heartily into all the reforms of the age, and be 'anti-devil all over'—and if they were not ready to do this he advised them to go to the workshop, the farm, or anywhere else, rather than into the ministry. This was talking very plainly—but if these young men would attempt to carry his

[1] Fourteen years back pastor of the Chatham Street Chapel in New York when it was raided by the Tammany Hall mob on the organization of the New York City Anti-Slavery Society.

advice into practice, where could they find churches and salaries?" [1]

The next day but one the visitors began a series of meetings, speaking chiefly upon Come-outerism from church and state. President Mahan entered the debate, defending the United States Constitution as an anti-slavery instrument, and consequently supporting the Liberty party; but as Garrison thought, he did not make a strong impression. Among the persons whom Garrison met at Oberlin was Miss Lucy Stone, afterward well known as a lecturer in favor of woman suffrage. He said: "She is a very superior young woman, and has a soul as free as the air, and is preparing to go forth as a lecturer, particularly in vindication of the rights of woman. Her course here has been very firm and independent, and she has caused no small uneasiness to the spirit of sectarianism in the institution."

The labors of Garrison in carrying his message from town to town of the Western Reserve were prodigious. Between August 17th, when he arrived at New Lyme, and September 11th, when he delivered his last address at Cleveland, twenty-six days in all, he made between thirty-five and forty addresses, each one of considerable length. He had been much exposed to chills, speaking several times in damp tents, and once at least being soaked by a cold rain-storm. The season was the malarious late summer and autumn; and at Cleveland he was prostrated by a fever, apparently of typhoid nature. His devoted friend Henry C. Wright hurried to his

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 203.

bedside as soon as he heard of his illness. At Garrison's request he went to Buffalo to report for the *Liberator* the proceedings of the national convention of the Liberty party, in session in that city October 20th and 21st, 1847. He brought back the news that John P. Hale, of New Hampshire, had been nominated for President of the United States, and then accompanied Garrison home. Garrison was confined to his bed for over a month, and his disease several times threatened to terminate fatally. After his return, Garrison suffered several relapses, and was unable to take any part in the work of the *Liberator* until the beginning of 1848. The paper was burdened with a greater deficit than ever, caused by an injudicious reduction in the price.

Thus the year ended gloomily for Garrison. The state of his private affairs was apparently desperate, and the cause of abolition seemed to many to be retrograding. Yet, sustained only by his own faith, with the support of a few friends, he maintained almost unabated cheerfulness, and absolutely undiminished courage and confidence. With the unshaken serenity of the convinced believer, he looked forward to the time when the slave power should bring about its own destruction. Garrison saw, as did a few others of his day, notably Giddings and Benton, that by the annexation of Texas the dam against anti-slavery sentiment was only built higher for a time, and could perceive the slow rise of the sluggish waters, one day to be loosed in a torrent of irresistible fierceness and power.

CHAPTER XII

THE PERIOD OF COMPROMISE

THE faith which convinced Garrison that the annexation of Texas, though ostensibly a victory for the slave power, was yet driving slavery nearer destruction, by bringing the free North into alignment against the extension of the system, also assured him that the war with Mexico was a stride toward the same goal. Many facts encouraged him. As the war advanced to its inevitable end, he thought he saw a reaction set in. The paralysis of the Northern conscience, the dumbing of the Northern voice, were coming to an end. The deadness of the border states, Virginia and Kentucky, was somewhat stirred for a moment; Delaware was on the side of the free states in opposing the extension of slavery. The reluctance to return fugitive slaves was growing; insomuch that in 1849 Garrison affirmed, with his usual hopefulness, that probably no surrender of a slave, either by or against law, would again be permitted on the soil of New England, to say nothing of the other free states.

The cycle of change through which Northern feeling toward slavery moved round from indifference, through distaste, dislike, and hostility, to abhorrence took the practical form of a political movement under the Constitution, to confine slavery within its existing limits. The leaders of

this movement, from Leicester King to Abraham Lincoln, promised the South its due as a party to the contract of union, pledged themselves to keep hands off slavery where it was by state law established, but would have invoked the flaming sword to protect from the sin every foot of American soil not yet cursed by it. Garrison's views, as he watched the restlessness of the North between 1848 and 1850, suffered no change. As for the Wilmot Proviso, which forbade the institution of slavery to be planted in any of the territory acquired from Mexico by the war, he looked on it with interest as a hopeful symptom and gave it his support; but he was on the whole indifferent to its passage, "feeling that the attempt to restrict slavery by laws . . . is precisely equivalent to damming up the Mississippi with bulrushes." He had exactly the same judgment of the Free-Soil party, which swallowed the perishing Liberty party in this year (1848), Hale withdrawing in favor of Martin Van Buren, the Free-Soil nominee. This organization differed from its predecessor in two respects. First, the Free-Soil party consisted in the main of those who had left one or the other of the old parties, and indicated a growing opposition to slavery, while the Liberty party was composed of Abolitionists, and in Garrison's view represented a degeneracy in true anti-slavery feeling. Secondly, the platform of the Free-Soil party abandoned the position of some of the earlier leaders that the Constitution was opposed to slavery, and pledged itself to abolition only where it was constitutionally possible. Garri-

son welcomed the creation of the new party, and felt toward its members none of the bitterness with which he had condemned the Liberty party. Yet, of course, its platform was regarded by him as morally defective. The "disunion ground" of the Abolitionists seemed to him "invulnerable," and he believed that at length all Northern parties must come to it. At the same time he felt great concern lest faithful Abolitionists should be enticed into voting with the Free-Soil party and for Martin Van Buren of all men; he therefore strove to keep before their eyes the "true issue," and enforced upon them their duty to protest by withdrawal against the unclean bargain of the Constitution.

The years of this rising tide of Free-Soil sentiment were years in which Garrison's activity was much impeded by illness. On account of the recurrence of the fever by which he had been attacked on his western journey, he went in July, 1848, to a water-cure at Northampton, Mass., where his brother-in-law had lived as a member of the community earlier visited by Garrison and no longer in existence, and where he still made his residence. The water-cure was owned and managed by a "Dr." Ruggles, a colored man of force and capacity, who had long before invited Garrison to come to Northampton for treatment. Garrison, who tried many medical experiments, had a fancy for hydropathy, but had never before given himself up to the severe regimen of a water-cure. The country bored him. He missed liveliness and bustle, and the sense of being busy for the good of mankind. He

found the men at the cure companionable, but the women "remarkably silent, and most of them not very interesting"; and on the whole he endured the irksome sanitarium life with little patience.

In the circle of his own family he met this year anew the mysteries of birth and death. On April 18, 1848, he lost his little daughter Elizabeth, the first of his children of whom he was bereft; and on October 28th, he was rejoiced by the birth of his son, Francis Jackson, the younger of the two biographers. Bereavement in itself Garrison bore with calm fortitude. Death to him was not fearful, but as natural and inevitable as life, and like life to be gravely accepted. But in 1849 the death of another of his children occurred under circumstances so shocking and painful as to leave a wound forever in the hearts of Garrison and his wife. This son, named after Professor Charles Follen, the story of whose bold and useful life and tragic death has been narrated in previous pages, was a child of seven. In a letter of tender pathos Garrison tells of his dead son's physical beauty and energy, his high promise, and his rarely affectionate nature. He had caught cold while the Garrisons were moving during the inclement month of March from their house on Pine Street to No. 65 Suffolk Street, now Shawmut Avenue. The cold developed into brain fever; the parents, not realizing the dangerous nature of the disease, tried to overcome it with domestic treatment; and the child was fatally scalded in a defective steam bath. Such an accident added to the sorrow of the father and mother the unavoid-

able feeling that they were responsible for their boy's death.

Upon the brief period of unrest, promising a wider political acceptance of Free-Soil ideas, followed the Compromise of 1850. The Compromise was, of course, a hollow bargain for the North, which received nothing but the abolition of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, while slavery itself was still maintained there. The admission of California as a free state was something beyond the control of parties, and could not properly be reckoned as an element in the Compromise. The South, on the other hand, got the refusal to enact the Wilmot Proviso, the indemnity to Texas for relinquishing her claims in New Mexico, and above all the Fugitive Slave Law. Here, as Garrison insisted, was the real point of the Compromise. By this law, the North, with sad conscientiousness, pledged all its force to the fulfilment of the compact to protect Southern economic institutions. It was the logical result of that compact, of the attempt to weld two incompatible civilizations—if one of them ever was or yet is a civilization in the usually accepted sense—to join together by formalities what God by the nature of things had forever put asunder. That the older school of Unionist politicians, and especially Webster, should support the Compromise, was but natural, in spite of occasional utterances in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, or against further yielding to the South. The whole meaning of their political life had been nothing less than the creation of the Union. They had warmed in the North a flame

of patriotic devotion to the country transcending loyalty to the state; they had given all their strength to opposing sectionalism and encouraging nationalism, and they would have gone counter to the whole tenor of their careers had they imperiled that love of the Union now so fair and strong, but which they had known to be so frail in its earlier years. To Garrison, of course, as to Whittier, Lowell, and Emerson, Webster's speech of the 7th of March was not only "indescribably base and wicked," but was an abandonment of an earlier and a purer faith. The connection of Whittier's poem "Ichabod" with the politics of the time is familiar; but some readers will remember that Longfellow's "Ode to the Union" was also published at this time. Garrison contrasted with the poet's idea of the Union,—

"Thou too, sail on, O Ship of State!"—

his own conception of it as a

"'perfidious bark
Built i' th' eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,'

rotting through all her timbers, leaking from stem to stern, laboring heavily on a storm-tossed sea, surrounded by clouds of disastrous portent, navigated by those whose object is a piratical one (namely the extension and perpetuity of slavery) and destined to go down 'full many a fathom deep' to the joy and exultation of all who are yearning for the deliverance of a groaning world." [1]

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 280.

Longfellow's words expressed something higher than mere material satisfaction with the Compromise; but to the American public at large, the Compromise was welcome because it seemed to bring external peace. The Union was confirmed, the sections were harmonious, the country was prospering as never before. Any action tending to break the calm was sure to be unfavorably received. Indeed, there was much to convince the observer that the reaction against slavery had spent its force; for example, the new "black" laws passed between 1849 and 1853 in the free states of Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, and Oregon, by which free blacks were forbidden under severe penalties to enter these states with the intention of residing, and were refused the equal protection of the law and subjected to vexations, sometimes petty, sometimes grave.

It is no wonder that the calling of the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society early in May, 1850, was the signal for mob violence. James Gordon Bennett asked in the New York *Herald*, "What business have all the religious lunatics in the free states to gather in this commercial city for purposes which, if carried into effect, would ruin and destroy its prosperity?" and urged the "men of sense" not to "allow meetings to be held in the city which are calculated to make our country the arena of blood and murder, and render our city an object of horror to the whole South." The *Herald* urged that "when free discussion does not promote the public good, it has no more right to exist than

a bad government that is dangerous and oppressive to the common weal. It should be overthrown." "Never," says the same paper, "was there more malevolence and unblushing wickedness avowed than by this same Garrison. . . . In Boston, a few months ago, a convention was held, the object of which was the overthrow of Sunday worship. Thus it appears that nothing divine or secular is respected by these fanatics." In its list of the speakers, the *Herald* repeated the old myth that Garrison was a mulatto, and strove to excite race prejudice directly and personally against him and others. The language of the New York *Globe* was even bolder: "If this Douglass [Frederick Douglass] shall reproclaim his Syracuse treason here, and any man shall arrest his diabolical career, and not injure him, thousands will exclaim, in language of patriotic love for the Constitution and the rights of the South, 'Did he not strike the villain dead?'"

Garrison was bold and serene, but quite aware of his danger. He wrote to his wife, his confidence in her strength and courage causing him perhaps to speak too freely. "In the course of another hour I shall be on my way to our meeting, . . . 'bound in the spirit' as Paul said of old, 'not knowing the things that shall befall me there,' saving that 'bonds and afflictions abide with me in every city,' though 'none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me' in comparison with the sacred cause to which I have been so long consecrated. That our meeting will be a stormy one, I have little doubt—perhaps brutal and

riotous in the extreme;—for Bennett, in each number of his infamous *Herald*, for a week, has been publishing the most atrocious articles respecting us, avowedly to have us put down by mobocratic violence; and it will be strange indeed if, with his almost omnipotent influence over all the mobocratic elements in this city, we are permitted to meet without imminent personal peril. Bennett has aimed to hold me up as a special object of vengeance; and thus I am doomed to go, under circumstances of peculiar trial and danger. It is evident that as long as our meetings are held, he is determined to set the mob upon us; with what temporary success will soon appear. As to the final result of all this, there can be no doubt. It is the prerogative of the God whom we serve to cause the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath to restrain.

"Here I must pause. We are all in the hands of a good Father, for time and eternity."[1] And this man was an "infidel"!

The meeting was held on the morning of May 7, 1850, in the "Tabernacle," a Congregational place of worship, situated on the northwest corner of Broadway and Anthony (now Worth) Street, the auditorium of which was a large square hall with a floor sloping down to the platform. Tiers of seats from behind the platform were carried around the sides to join the gallery. The leadership of the disorderly crowd gathered to break up the meeting was assumed by a certain Isaiah Rynders, a bully-rook and meeting-breaker of wide

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 285

experience, who had been a boatman on the Hudson and a gambler in the Southwest, a man accustomed to violence, and bold and self-assertive in the midst of physical danger, a Tammany "district boss," and captain of a political rowdy organization, the "Empire Club." The burly fellow, of the sort we now understand better than we used to, had posted himself at one side of the organ-loft behind the platform, where he could command the battle-field with the sweep of his eye. His followers were about him, ready to surge down on the platform when the time should come.

Garrison dressed himself with scrupulous care. In order to avoid the least appearance of singularity, he even changed the turn-down collar he had been in the habit of wearing through all the moods of fashion, for a stand-up collar, such as was customary at the time. He opened the meeting with reading from the Scriptures, and began his address without interruption. His topic was the inevitable one, the inconsistency between the profession and the practice of the Christian churches of the country. He spoke as usual with force and even with violence, but with dignity. Intending to take up for consideration each great religious denomination, he began with the Roman Catholic Church. Captain Rynders interrupted him to ask whether there were no other churches beside the Catholic the members of which held slaves. Garrison answered his question by proceeding in his review of the denominations, and concluded with the intentionally startling declaration, "A belief in Jesus is no evidence of

goodness." After some little disturbance, he asserted that if slaves worshiped Jesus, they did not worship a "slaveholding and a slave-breeding Jesus";—that now the old Pharisees were dead, Jesus had become respectable, and sat in the President's chair. "Zachary Taylor sits there, and he believes in Jesus. He believes in war, and the Jesus that 'gave the Mexicans hell!'"

When Garrison referred to President Taylor, Rynders, followed by a yelling crowd, rushed down on the platform, with menacing gestures, and bellowed: "I will not allow you to insult the President of the United States. You shan't do it."

The behavior of Garrison and his associates on the platform was cool and composed. Garrison told Rynders that he had not spoken disrespectfully of President Taylor; that he had only quoted some of the President's own recent words. In quiet tones he added that Rynders ought not to interrupt,—that he might speak himself if he would, and that Garrison would keep order. The confusion continued. A young Malchus, the son of federal Judge Kane of Philadelphia, rushed to protect his beloved townsman, the Unitarian minister, Rev. Dr. William H. Furness. "They shall not touch a hair of your head," he uttered in a tone suffused with wrath, and shook his fist in Rynders's face. "If he touches Mr. Garrison, I'll kill him!"

The floor was formally offered to Rynders, who was invited to a seat on the platform. This he declined; but having some sense of fair play, stood to one side with folded arms, glooming, until Gar-

rison had finished his speech and had offered his resolutions condemnatory of current religion. When Garrison resumed his place, the floor was again offered to Rynders, who preferred to have his spokesman follow Dr. Furness. This clergyman, famous for his beautiful elocution, made a winning and powerful plea for freedom of speech, which, though it provoked Rynders to interruption, at last drew applause even from him. The speech saved the meeting from destruction. Captain Rynders's speaker was then put forward. He was recognized by Garrison as a former pressman on the *Liberator*, and is described in the biography by Garrison's sons as a "Professor Grant, a seedy-looking personage, having one hand tied round with a dirty cotton cloth." His speech, on the thesis that negroes are not men but a kind of monkeys, provoked the jeers of the mercurial crowd of Rynders's followers, whom Garrison tried to keep in order. When "Professor" Grant had finished, Frederick Douglass came forward, and asked the obvious question, "Am I a man?" As the audience roared its answer, Rynders sneered, "You are not a black man; you are only half a nigger."

"Then," responded Douglass, with the blandest of smiles and bows, "I am your half-brother." When in the course of his address, Douglass criticized Horace Greeley, Rynders, as Greeley's political opponent, concurred. "I am happy," said Douglass, "to have the assent of my half-brother here;" and throughout his speech, he continued with the genial impertinence of the practiced

speaker, who knows how to divert an audience at the expense of an adversary, without giving the adversary any handle to take hold of. Finally he said, "We were born here, we are not dying out, and we mean to stay here. We made the clothes you have on, the sugar you put into your tea. We would do more for you if allowed."

"Yes, you would cut our throats for us!" in allusion to an injudicious assertion of George Thompson, that slaves would be justified in cutting their masters' throats, which was assumed to be the accepted doctrine of Abolitionists.

"No, but we would cut your hair for you."

Douglass's speech led to the dramatic culmination of the meeting. He called for the Rev. S. S. Ward, the editor of the *Impartial Citizen*. From the back of the platform came forward "a large man, so black that as Wendell Phillips said, when he shut his eyes you could not see him."

"Well," said Rynders, "this is the original nigger!"

"I have often heard of the magnanimity of Captain Rynders," replied Ward, "but the half has never been told me." His speech was in so noble a strain that the very mob applauded him, and the meeting for the day ended with a triumph not only for the Anti-Slavery Society, but for the negro race, "two members of which," says Dr. Furness, "whose claims to be human had been denied, had by mere force of intellect overwhelmed their maligners with confusion."

In the evening the speeches were broken up by

noises; and on the following day, Rynders and his men, having learned that intellectual weapons cut their fingers, confined themselves to physical disturbances. The eccentric Burleigh was derided. Rynders put his arm round Burleigh's neck and affectionately stroked his long sandy beard. Phillips was made the target for filthy personal abuse, and at last the rabble put forward a representative to propose resolutions against abolition. Rynders declared them carried by acclamation. The police did nothing to arrest the disturbance. Finally, under protest, Garrison was obliged to declare the meeting closed, the proprietors of the building refusing to allow it to be longer used by the society. Their ground was fear of damage, and especially the imminent danger to the New York Society Library, familiarly known as the "City," or "Public" Library, where a little further up Broadway were held the meetings of the evening of May 7th, and of the following morning.

That the triumph of violence was rather over freedom of speech than over Abolitionism was generally recognized throughout the North. Efforts were made to excite a mob in Boston, but though the meeting was harassed and disturbed, it was not broken up. Indeed, of those who took part in the disturbances both in New York and in Boston, it may be said, as of most anti-abolition mobs, that reprehensibly as they behaved, they were not bloodthirsty or even greatly bent on violence. They were mainly composed of ignorant and foolish rather than ill-disposed persons, actuated by a pleasure in

mischief and a desire for vulgar sport, not commonly by dark designs and a settled hatred of Abolitionism. Bad as they were, their course bears testimony to the general mildness of the Northern temper.

It might have been expected that equal violence on the other side would have been manifested in opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law. That law abrogated the fundamental guarantees of personal liberty so deeply written in Anglo-American jurisprudence. Annulling the writ of *habeas corpus;* giving the person whose status was in question no right to testify ; in effect laying on him the burden of proof; awarding the officers who remanded the unfortunate to slavery twice the fees allowed in case the decision went in his favor : it was at once a testimony to the weakness of the system which it was designed to support, and to the enormous force of the pro-slavery bargain in controlling the North. A cry of horror went up from hundreds of anti-slavery meetings, and even the less extreme Abolitionists and many who were not Abolitionists defied the law, and proclaimed their intention of refusing to yield obedience to it. Four of the incidents connected with the enforcement of the law,—the slaying of Gorsuch at Christiana, Pa., by the negroes he claimed, the rescue of Jerry McHenry at Syracuse, the rescue of Shadrach at Boston by a mob of his own race, and the remanding to slavery from Boston of Thomas Simms,—all struck the public attention. Far more justly may the student reflect upon the many quiet and unopposed, apparently

unnoticed, instances of enforcement of the law, often on flimsy evidence and under cruel circumstances. Was not Judge Taney merely recognizing facts when he implied that the traditional American view of the negro was that he had no rights which a white man is bound to respect? In spite of the shocking nature of the law, the majority in the North remained silent. The temper of the day is shown by the fact that in 1851 the American Anti-Slavery Society could obtain no hall in New York, and was driven to Syracuse for its annual meeting.

In 1851 the infirm condition of Garrison's health drove him often from his desk. Yet despite grounds for discouragement and his own physical weakness, the year, though marked by little obvious progress for the cause, was one of much delight for him. George Thompson made a visit of eight months to the United States, and Garrison had great pleasure in his company. The twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the *Liberator* took place in this year, and was celebrated in a manner to touch Garrison's heart and to encourage him for the future.

Some of the objects of his activity during this period seem obscure and unworthy. He strove strenuously but futilely to induce two foreigners visiting the United States, each on a special mission, to declare themselves against slavery. In 1849 Father Theobald Mathew, the Irish temperance advocate, visited America. Father Mathew had already given evidence of anti-slavery sentiments, having with O'Connell and seventy thousand other Irishmen signed an address to their countrymen in

the United States, urging them to oppose slavery. But the Irish at that time in this country were in the main unskilled day-laborers, competing directly with negroes, and like the "poor whites" in the South, jealous of their own social and racial position above the slaves. Accordingly, when Father Mathew arrived in America, he regarded an expression of opinion on the subject of slavery as likely to interfere with the chief object of his visit. He was obviously embarrassed by his signature to the address, and though he could not deny it, would not expressly avow it. The course followed by Father Mathew provoked a lively newspaper discussion on both sides of the Atlantic, and to a debate in the Senate of the United States upon a resolution to invite him to a seat on the floor of the Senate chamber. Garrison wrote five letters to Father Mathew, the "false priest" as the Garrisons call him,[1] affirming that his conduct would be likely to encourage violence against the Abolitionists, and holding him responsible "for leading his countrymen astray, and for adding to the anguish and despair of the slave."

In 1852 Garrison made the same attempt with Louis Kossuth, the brilliant Hungarian who visited America to obtain, if possible, diplomatic recognition or some governmental action in favor of his people, or, at least, money for their cause. The romantic history of Hungary and Kossuth's marvelous eloquence would have attracted the attention of Americans at any time, but when there was no po-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 259.

litical question to engross their minds, he created an excitement approaching ecstasy. Garrison regarded the idea of visiting slave-cursed America in order to free Hungary from mere political dominance as a shocking anomaly, and called upon Kossuth to declare his sentiments on the subject of slavery as a possible and worthy contribution to the cause of liberty, one the world over. With diplomatic skill, the Hungarian, like the Irishman, refused to commit himself on the subject, as ulterior to his purpose and function ; Garrison in vain called on him to be "faithful and fearless," and censured him bitterly.

But the really important event of the year 1852 was the appearance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which was published in March. Within a year, three hundred thousand copies were sold in America, and a million and a half in Europe. In spite of crudity, it rapt and mastered its readers by the force of genius displayed in it, and inculcated its doctrine with an effectiveness such as has been possessed by no other work of the imagination with a purpose except the one with which it is inevitably compared, namely, Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse.* Not intended as a fair picture of average slavery, it was a just account of the possibilities of horror and cruelty in the system, and stirred the pulse and moved the heart of the whole civilized world. Garrison testified to the power of the book, and welcomed its influence. He commented characteristically on "Uncle Tom" as an example of Christian non-resistance, wondering whether Mrs. Stowe

would set the same standard for a white man. No immediate effect of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* upon abolition societies and Free-Soil votes was perceived, and hence the practical influence of the book has been belittled ; but as a living body of ideas, slowly working to modify the sentiments of the future, its power is beyond calculation. The most penetrating criticism thus far made is that Uncle Tom was a white man with a black skin.

The latter part of 1852 and the whole of 1853 were given up by Garrison to an almost uninterrupted round of conventions, both of Abolitionists and of the supporters of the multitude of other reforms espoused by him. In April, 1853, he for the first time visited Cincinnati, the centre of a settlement largely from New England, though not mainly so, as was that of the Western Reserve. This time he made the journey all the way by rail. The application of the electric telegraph to train-despatching had made possible the administration of large systems with through trains ; and four railroads, the New York Central, the Erie, the Pennsylvania, and the Baltimore and Ohio now provided east and west lines from the Atlantic seaboard to the northern states of the Mississippi Valley. The north and south transportation line of the Mississippi River was diminished in importance, and the rapid immigration made possible by the railroads created the combined North and Northwest which in time shut in and overcame the South in the great struggle of the sections. Some details of Garrison's journey are not without interest. He reached the east bank of

the Hudson late at night. There were no good accommodations on this bank, and he was afraid of losing his train out of Albany if he stayed where he was till morning; so he was under the necessity of crossing the river in a small boat. He complained of the inconvenience, and of the exorbitant charge of five York shillings, sixty-two and a half cents, which he had to pay. He left Boston Friday afternoon and reached Cincinnati Monday evening. The journey had occupied him for more than three full days, including two sleepless nights; if he had traveled continuously, it would have occupied about two days.

In Cincinnati, on the banks of the Ohio River, he looked across from the free soil of Ohio to slave-ridden Kentucky, his thoughts on the heroic but injudicious Cassius M. Clay, publishing his little abolition paper from behind the walls within which he was in a state of perpetual siege. Clay while a student at Yale had been converted by Garrison, and was striving to reform his native state from within. He sent a message to the meeting at Cincinnati, hailing Garrison as "the first of living men." It is noteworthy that Garrison's resolutions on this occasion emphasize rather the economic than the moral evils of slavery, and prophesy the "New South."

Driven back to Boston by an attack of pleurisy, he spoke as usual at the May meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York, where there was no interruption or disturbance. He rejoiced in the successful opposition to the

Fugitive Slave Law, and in the appearance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* Henry Ward Beecher, who followed him, spoke for the first time from an abolition platform, though not quite as a Garrisonian Abolitionist. After a busy summer, Garrison took another western journey in October, intending particularly to visit Michigan. On the way, at Cleveland, he spoke at a Woman's Rights Convention, where the younger brother of a clergyman, of whom he had spoken severely, committed the undignified violence of pulling his nose.

In Michigan, as in Ohio before, Stephen S. Foster, and his wife, Abby Kelley Foster, had been already preparing the way as evangelists. They thought the political anti-slavery party now very weak and the time propitious for Garrisonianism. On the whole, Garrison found political anti-slavery still in the ascendent. In Detroit he could not get a place in which to speak, and passed his hours of enforced idleness in a visit to Windsor, Canada, where were many colored refugees. The only tangible result of the journey was the foundation of a Michigan Anti-Slavery Society at Adrian. Finally, Garrison rounded out this year, which had been crowded full of meetings, with a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the American Anti-Slavery Society, at Philadelphia.

Restlessly active as were the years from the Mexican War to the passage of the Nebraska Bill, they were more notable for the advance in Garrison's religious views than for his anti-slavery propaganda. When the Chardon Street Convention was held in

1840, Garrison already adhered to many heterodox opinions; yet he was far from being radically unevangelical. He still believed in the inspiration of the Bible, in the divinity of Jesus, and in the related doctrine of the Atonement. But with the course of time his orthodox theological views on these matters suffered steady disintegration. Even his anti-sabbatarianism increased in strength, so that late in 1847 he wrote and circulated a call for a convention, not this time to discuss the obligation of observing Sunday, but to oppose the laws punishing Sabbath-breaking,—to shake off "the sabbatical yoke" which lay "so heavily on the necks of the American people." The fundamental ground of the call was, that to establish by law any day of the week as sacred to religious observances, and to punish those who engaged in their ordinary vocations on that day, was to interfere with liberty of conscience. The call also declared that the Scriptures gave no warrant for compelling the observance of any day of the week as the Sabbath. The immediate object of assembling the convention was to oppose a society—the American and Foreign Sabbath Union, which was carrying on an aggressive campaign in favor of the sabbatical observance of Sunday. This society employed a permanent secretary, who gave his whole time to the cause, traveling thousands of miles, making addresses before all kinds of public assemblies, and distributing tracts throughout the country.

Against this society Garrison and his fellow signers charged that it was animated by "the spirit

of religious bigotry and ecclesiastical tyranny—the spirit which banished the Baptists from Massachusetts, and subjected the Quakers to imprisonment and death, in the early history of this country." The call sums up the grounds for assembling the convention by expressing the belief that "the efforts of this 'Sabbath Union' ought to be baffled by at least a corresponding energy on the parts of the friends of civil and religious liberty. . . . That the Sabbath as now recognized and enforced is one of the main pillars of Priestcraft and Superstition, and the stronghold of a merely ceremonial religion; that, in the hands of a sabbatizing clergy, it is a mighty obstacle in the way of all the reforms of the age,—such as Anti-Slavery, Peace, Temperance, Purity, Human Brotherhood, etc., etc.,—and rendered adamantine in its aspect toward bleeding Humanity, whose cause must not be pleaded but whose cries must be stifled on its 'sacred' occurrence. . . ." [1]

The document gives some little consideration to the social and economic aspect of the Sabbath question,—one of the exceedingly few instances in which Garrison even by the most indirect implication refers to the lot of the laboring man. Here as usual he insists that liberation from sin would destroy want and affliction, and bring grinding toil to an end. "We have no objection either to the first or the seventh day of the week as a day of rest from bodily toil, both for man and beast. On the contrary, such rest is not only desirable but in-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 224.

dispensable. Neither man nor beast can long endure unmitigated labor. But we do not believe that it is in harmony with the will of God, or the physical nature of man, that mankind should be doomed to hard and wasting toil six days out of seven to obtain a bare subsistence. Reduced to such a pitiable condition, the rest of one day in the week is indeed grateful, and must be regarded as a blessing; but it is totally inadequate wholly to repair the physical injury or the moral degradation consequent on such protracted labor. It is not in accordance with the law of life that our race should be thus worked, and only thus partially relieved from suffering and a premature death. They need more, and must have more, instead of less rest; and it is only for them to be enlightened and reclaimed—to put away those things which now cause them to grind in the prison-house of Toil, namely, idolatry, priestcraft, sectarism, slavery, war, intemperance, licentiousness, monopoly, and the like—in short to live in peace, obey the eternal law of being, strive for each other's welfare, and 'glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are his'—and they will secure the rest, not only of one day in seven, but of a very large portion of their earthly existence. To them shall be granted the mastery over every day and every hour of time, as against want and affliction; for the earth shall be filled with abundance for all." [1]

The convention met March 23 and 24, 1848. The circular calling it was signed altogether by Aboli-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, pp. 224, 225.

tionists, and chiefly by Abolitionists of the extreme wing; and the most notable speakers were Garrison himself and his close associates. The orthodox Boston *Recorder* says of the meeting: "The most influential speaker . . . was the redoubtable Garrison himself. At every turn of the business, his hand grasped the steering-oar; and let his galley-slaves row with what intent they would, he guided all things at his will." This anti-Sabbath convention now caused him to be named the "Prince of New England infidelity."

Garrison's repugnance to the idea of ceremonial holiness was not limited to hallowed days, but extended to a consecrated clergy and a sacred ecclesiastical organization. He had come to abhor a clerical order, and scorned the conception that any church can be the one Church of Christ; and this same year, 1848, he proclaimed his views in an editorial in the *Liberator*. "Representing no society or body of people on earth, speaking only my own sentiments, on my own responsibility, on the platform of free expression, not of technical anti-slavery," he wrote, "I am free to avow my opposition to the clergy, not because in the mass, or in general, they are found in league with popular wickedness, resisting every righteous reform by every means within their power, but as an order, claiming divine sanction and authority. My objections are not to the 'abuses' of the order. It has no abuses; any more than rum-drinking or slaveholding. It is, in itself, an abuse—or rather, it is the source of abuses. . . . It is the sworn

foe of Progress, a mountainous obstacle in the pathway of Humanity. It was unknown to primitive Christianity; it derives no authority from the gospel. It is to the Church what a self-constituted nobility is to the state. Like the poison-tree, it must be exterminated, root and branch. For as strong reasons, I seek the extirpation of every church, which, by virtue of its organization, claims to be divinely instituted the Church of Christ, or a branch of that Church, and therefore makes the evidence of true religion to consist in joining it, or acknowledging the validity of its claims. . . . The Church of Christ is not mutable but permanent, and therefore not a formal organization. No one can be voted into it, no one expelled from it, by human suffrages." [1]

His belief in the plenary inspiration of the Bible had also been gradually undermined. The "memorable conversations," in the halls and lobbies of the Chardon Street Convention, to which Emerson refers, may have had to do with this change of faith; but as early as 1843, Edmund Quincy noted the alteration in Garrison's views, rejoicing for him as a man, but lamenting for the cause as an Abolitionist. "It was so convenient to be able to reply to those who were calling him infidel, that he believed as much as anybody, and swallowed the whole Bible in a lump, from Genesis to Revelation, both included. They say that in Connecticut they always keep one member of a pious family unconverted to do their wicked work for them. I sup-

[1] *Liberator*, Nov. 10, 1848.

pose my policy is something of the same sort." [1] Garrison's denial of the inspiration of the Bible was most conspicuously expressed at a convention assembled at Hartford, Conn., in June, 1853, to discuss the "origin, authority, and influence of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures." At the convention, the mere calling of which was naturally regarded as blasphemous, a disorderly crowd in the galleries, largely theological students from Trinity College, disturbed the proceedings with unseemly noises; and when the attempt was finally made to restore order by arresting some of the rioters, knives were drawn, sword-canes flourished, and it seemed likely that blood would be shed. Garrison declared that the American clergy as a body would "burn the Bible to-morrow, if persecution should be the result of disobedience."

In one of his speeches at Hartford, Garrison asserted that he well knew the outcry of "Infidel! Infidel! Infidel!" which would rise against him, and well understood that his presence would be construed as another evidence of the infidel character of the anti-slavery movement. "Shall I, therefore, be dumb? . . . Why, sir, no freedom of speech or inquiry is conceded to me in this land. Am I not vehemently told both at the North and the South that I have no right to meddle with the question of slavery? And my right to speak on any other subject, in opposition to public opinion, is equally denied to me." These words show how much more Garrison stood for the only really im-

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 95.

portant freedom, which carries all others with it, freedom of the mind and of speech, than merely for emancipation, however dear the latter was to his heart.

His changing views as to the office and work of Jesus may be traced with some clearness from the record he has left, though it is not possible to tell exactly when he gave up the evangelical view. In January, 1841, he could write, "I glory in nothing here below save in Jesus and Him crucified." Walking home from Theodore Parker's sermon "On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity," delivered in May, 1841, he said to his companion, Johnson, "Infidelity, Oliver, infidelity!" In 1842 he was shocked to see the name of Socrates placed beside that of Jesus. But by 1845 he took very calmly Parker's heresies, minimizing the importance of the supernatural elements in Christianity, in comparison with the moral ones. "Surely," he says, "the obligations and duties of man to his fellow man and his God are in no degree affected by the question, whether miracles were wrought in Judea or not, with whatever interest that question may be invested." The ordinances of Christianity were as little respected by him as the articles of belief. The Baptist Garrison had traveled a long way when he could say to his little daughter, who asked whether she had been baptized: "No, my darling, but you have had a good bath every morning, which is a great deal better."

Garrison's course not only offended the great body of believers, but pained and grieved many who

sympathized with his efforts to destroy slavery and who respected his personality. When some of his friends, American and English, displayed their uneasiness, he replied to them that in so far as they were persuaded that their ideas rested on a solid foundation, they courted investigation; and that just in so far as their ideas rested on mere tradition, or as they felt themselves insecure in their belief, they feared it. His reply to Mrs. Stowe, who wrote to him with excellent temper upon the subject of his "infidelity," evinces the point of view he had at last reached. After asserting that "veneration for the Book" had done nothing for the "cause of bleeding humanity" he declared, "My reliance for the deliverance of the oppressed universally is upon the nature of man, the inherent wrongfulness of oppression, the power of truth, and the omnipotence of God." The last phrase is noteworthy. "God," as J. M. McKim said with reference to Garrison to a friend, "is in all his thoughts." However far he wandered from orthodoxy, his whole life was an act of devotion to God. He saw in the world the governance of a righteous spirit, a personal Deity, in whose presence he walked habitually, and to whom he regarded his every act as related.

Garrison evinced an enthusiasm quite as American as Athenian for every new thing. The phenomena of Spiritualism, which were exciting America in the decade from 1840 to 1850, engaged his attention. He looked at evidence offered without prejudice, and on being challenged for his opinion on

the subject, expressed his conviction, in May, 1842, that although some cheats had been encountered, yet no theory of imposture or delusion had adequately explained the manifestations. He was staggered by the intellectual inferiority of the communications given. He was, however, greatly affected by a message of friendly import, purporting to come from his alienated friend, N. P. Rogers, who had died in 1846. In course of time, the receipt of many such messages wrought in him the comfortable conviction that Rogers, reconciled, had become in a sense his guardian and familiar spirit. Though convinced that words from the departed may come to earth, that bells and tables and other bodies are lifted by superhuman agency, and even that spirit photographs are taken, he gave little attention to the subject. He was aware that much deceit attends "spiritualistic phenomena," and received no sufficiently important message to warrant him in giving Spiritualism attention against the wishes of his wife, who disliked it. His belief, of course, was another count against him in the indictment of heterodoxy.

He was interested in phrenology and clairvoyance, and devoted to experiments in medicine. He consulted a number of regular practitioners, (each had a different opinion as to his malady), as well as hydropathists, clairvoyants, and herb doctors, not giving credence, but in order to try all things. "It may do me good," he says of a new treatment; "it certainly will not, if I do not try it." Since one of the clairvoyants beheld the trouble on

the wrong side, his faith in them was not strong, although, he intimates, they agreed as well as the physicians. Homeopathic treatment was not vigorous enough for him. His greatest confidence was in the system of Samuel Thomson, which, combining steam baths and cayenne pepper, was sufficiently emphatic to suit his taste for decided effects in medical treatment. He was devoted to patent medicines. "You remember," Edmund Quincy wrote to R. W. Webb, "his puff of Dr. C——'s Anti-Scrofulous Panacea, . . . in which he said that he felt it 'permeating the whole system in the most delightful manner.' 'Permeating the system!' said [Dr. Harvey E.] Weston, with the malice of a regular practitioner; 'why, it was the first time he had taken a glass of grog, and he didn't know how good it was!'"[1]

It was the advertising testimonials, we are told by his sons, which led him to have such faith in each new panacea, and which his faith in human nature caused him to credit. Usually he left the medicine in his closet unopened, "for a rainy day"; or if he opened the bottle, he generally took only a few doses, abandoning the experiment in case the medicine did not seem to produce an immediate beneficial effect. His method accordingly provided its own safeguard. It requires, however, a full measure of his own good humor to refrain from harsh judgments over this feebler side of a strong and sensible nature. Garrison's dabblings in self-cure and the taking of advertised nostrums had

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 323.

their amusing features, yet really deserve to be condemned as something worse than a mere foible.

With equally naive enthusiasm he rejoiced in all kinds of labor-saving inventions, fitting his household with every "gimcrack" in the way of housekeeping machinery which his means would allow. In the same spirit he welcomed phonography to Boston in 1845. His sanguine temperament led him to hope in it for the beginning which would lead to a universal language. He had felt the need of such a language at international conventions, where he had been led to "testify against the existing diversity of tongues among mankind, as unnatural, fraudulent, afflictive, insupportable." This is perhaps the quaintest manifestation of the unhistorical, anti-national, unimaginative temper necessary to generate the spirit of "universal reform." He might, with equal consistency, have introduced resolutions against the law of gravitation, as impeding the upward, angelic movement to which man is obviously entitled by virtue of his aspiring nature. A language, like a state of society, is slowly wrought by the painful struggle of the ages. At least, Garrison hoped, phonography would correct the monstrous absurdities of English spelling, and "enable the ignorant to be taught to read and write in an incredibly short space of time,—compressing the labor of months into weeks and of years into months." Naturally he never learned to use the "plain, simple, consistent, and infallibly sure" system, though for a time he added phonography to the reforms on which he

lectured. The enormous importance to his cause of rendering the speaker independent of mobs by enabling him to reach the world through the papers escaped his insight at first, though he soon recognized it.

In spite of his hopeful and unrelaxed activity, Garrison must have felt that little anti-slavery progress had been made since 1845, and he did not understand the signs of the times when in 1854 the passage of the Nebraska Bill shook into sudden crystallization the overcharged waters of Northern feeling. The measure dealt with the region known as Nebraska,—that portion of the Louisiana Purchase west of Iowa, Missouri, and Minnesota, including the present Kansas and Nebraska, the greater part of North and South Dakota and of Montana, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. By the Missouri Compromise, this region had been closed to slavery, as lying north of 36° 30′. By the Compromise of 1850 the feelings of the South had been salved as to California by leaving the decision upon the lawfulness of slavery within the territories of Utah and New Mexico to the inhabitants of those territories. The South, however, could not rest so long as slavery was restricted, and the success of the Compromise led Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, to bid for Southern support of his candidacy for the presidency, by proposing to apply the principle of "squatter sovereignty" to the territory of Nebraska. In the view of the anti-slavery element in the North, this was an act of the basest bad faith. The North believed itself

to have borne patiently the menacings of the South, and to have done, if not "with alacrity" yet with conscientiousness, its full duty in maintaining the bargain to support slavery, which had become so distasteful to it. Now to see the compact of 1820 repudiated, to hear calmly suggested the division of the free states by a vast wedge of territory, easily accessible from the South, across which it seemed probable that the movement of immigrants from the free states would be impeded by the presence of slavery on the soil, at last moved the North to genuine and profound anger.

To Garrison the free-soil wrath was a trifle. He did not regard it as really serious. He had watched the South advancing from the Missouri Compromise to the annexation of Texas, and thence to the Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Law. Now the free-soil territories were to be invaded, and only the last step, the opening of the whole country to slavery, would remain. He was accustomed to see Northern bluster subside into cowardly retreat, and Southern threats successful in gaining all that the South demanded. He had no sympathy with a settlement which did not wholly destroy slavery in the United States, or separate the country entirely from the curse. The Nebraska bill passed May 22, 1854. Two days later occurred the arrest in Boston of Anthony Burns, as a fugitive from Virginia. A multitude of people happened to be in the city attending various conventions. Others came expressly to resist the officers. An assault intended to release the fugitive, in which a deputy marshal lost his

life, was repulsed, and at last the commissioner surrendered Burns to his master's agent. Guarded by the armed forces of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the unfortunate man was marched to the vessel which was to carry him back to slavery.

To Abolitionists the slave power seemed stronger than ever. They did not believe that at this time more than at any other the popular indignation of the North meant anything. The disunion cry of 1845, the anger against the Mexican War, the outburst against the Fugitive Slave Law had sunk into sluggish and unholy hypocritical quiet. Now it appeared that slavery was to spread over the Union. The annexation of Cuba; the gaining of a foothold in Hayti; the acquisition of a slave empire in the valley of the Amazon were all seriously threatened;—and where, the Abolitionists asked, was the force to resist these projects of the South, intoxicated with success?

On the fourth of July, 1854, at the abolitionist celebration in Framingham, Mass., Garrison led the proceedings. After Scripture readings and some remarks, he proceeded to manifest by a symbolic action "the estimation in which he held the pro-slavery laws and deeds of the nation." First he burnt a copy of the Fugitive Slave Law. Borrowing the formula from the solemn national adjurations in Deuteronomy, he said, "And let all the people say, *Amen.*" His audience responded cheerfully. Then he burnt the decision of the commissioner remanding Burns to slavery; then

the charge of the court as to the treasonable nature of the assault on the court house in the effort to rescue Burns. Finally, "holding up the United States Constitution, he branded it as the source and parent of the other atrocities,—'a covenant with death and an agreement with hell,'—and consumed it to ashes on the spot, exclaiming, 'So perish all compromises with tyranny! and let all the people say, *Amen!*'"

With this theatrical and not, as we coldly judge it, wholly inspiring act Garrison reached the culmination of his disunion preaching, which had been carried on for thirteen years. As opposed to the free-soil principles, the disunion policy could find its only statesmanlike justification on the basis of Garrison's own profoundest hopes in the belief that it might do away with slavery without a war. His doctrine, however, was a doctrine of peace only in his own honestly deluded mind, and in the minds of those who were led astray by his sincere yet fallacious reasoning. From this point forward the story of his life is to be told in relation to the armed conflict that he had dreaded; for henceforth the forces which he himself had helped to create and which he had long impotently watched as they followed a course contemned by him as a feeble and wicked compromise, were to burst through the limits which he would have set for them. The struggle had in reality begun to take the form of armed and violent conflict leading on to open war.

CHAPTER XIII

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

THE Nebraska Bill ostensibly left it to the people of each incoming state to determine whether or not slavery should be tolerated upon its soil. The bill really gave up Kansas to the horrors of a hideous form of internecine conflict, the unregulated violence of guerrilla bands, mob murder, private assassination, waste, plunder, and arson, without the decisive matching of forces in the open field. As the magnitude of the conflict increased, and the cause of the free-soil settlers in Kansas against the Border ruffians was preached in the North as a crusade, Garrison withheld his sympathy. He still taught peace as a duty. When Henry Ward Beecher said, "You might as well read the Bible to a herd of buffaloes as to those fellows who follow Atchison and Stringfellow," Garrison replied: "For our own part, we deeply compassionate the miserable and degraded tools of the slave propagandists, who know not what they do, and (as Mr. Beecher correctly says) are 'raked together from the purlieus of a frontier slave state, drugged with whiskey, and hounded on by broken and degenerate politicians;' . . . yet they are not beasts, nor to be treated as beasts. . . . When Jesus said, 'Fear not those who kill the body,' He broke every deadly weapon; when He said, . . . 'Father, forgive them,'

. . . He did not treat them as 'a herd of buffaloes,' but as poor, misguided and lost men." Garrison asserted, also, that the settlers were not contending for liberty, but for their rights as white men. Having "consented to make the existence of liberty or slavery dependent on the will of the majority, fairly expressed," they were but reaping the divinely ordered retribution of their own sinful policy. "While they are yet standing in common with the great body of the American people with their feet upon the necks of four millions of chattel slaves, . . . with what face can they ask for the sympathy and coöperation of those who are battling for freedom on a world-wide basis?"[1] Finally, Garrison asked, if the settlers should be furnished with Sharp's rifles, why not the slaves? "Who will go for arming the slave population?" The answer was to be given at Harper's Ferry.

Like the Free-Soil party, the new Republican party evoked Garrison's approval of its aims as far as they went, but left him dissatisfied by its devotion to the Union, and its toleration of slavery under any circumstances. His view of the Abolitionist's duty was that he must not abandon his principles, "for they are immutable and eternal;" or lessen his demands, "for they are just and right;" or "postpone the glorious object, . . . the immediate extinction of slavery, for that would be fatuity." He must not "substitute the non-extension for the abolition of slavery, for that would be to wrestle with an effect, while leaving the cause

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, pp. 437–440.

untouched." He must "keep his own hands clean," and "call to repentance" his guilty land.

The burden of his preaching was peaceful disunion. In 1855, as his sons remark,[1] he anticipated the phrase which later, on the lips of Lincoln, became historic:—"A church or government which accords the same privileges to slavery as to liberty is a 'house divided against itself, which cannot stand.'" In 1857, after the election of Buchanan, Garrison and his associates agitated for disunion with new hope. Among the names now first appearing on the list of active propagandists, the most noteworthy is that of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, of Worcester, Mass., then a young Unitarian clergyman of generous spirit, whose enthusiasm burnt with steady heat under a lively flame of wit and debonair cheerfulness. He was no non-resistant, for he had led the assault to deliver Anthony Burns. Like the older Abolitionists after the annexation of Texas, he was disappointed upon the election of Buchanan to find so little vigor in the demand for a separation from the Union. "I talk with my Republican friends in vain to know whence comes this wondrous change which has altered their whole horizon since election. I talk with a man who said before election: 'If Buchanan is elected, I am with you henceforward—I am a disunionist,' and I find he thinks there must have been some mistake about that remark; he thinks it must have been his partner who said it, not he. They all have their partners!" [2]

[1] *Life*, Vol. III, p. 420.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 450.

The Dred Scott decision of March 6, 1857, letting down practically all existing barriers against the introduction of slaveholders and their slaves into Kansas and elsewhere, and angering and alarming the Republicans, encouraged the Abolitionists to believe the time auspicious for calling a disunion convention of all the free states, to meet in Cleveland in October, 1857. The financial panic which began in September caused the convention to be postponed; and the continuance of disturbed financial conditions, together with the religious revival of 1858, prevented it from being held in that year. Then came the excitement of the impending conflict, the political campaign, and the actual outbreak of war. The opportunity to hold the convention had gone by.

The growing intensity of sectional feeling, both North and South, found decided expression during the year 1858. It was in this year that Seward affirmed the existence of the "irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces," and that Lincoln declared: "'A house divided against itself cannot stand'; I believe that this government cannot endure half slave and half free." Garrison, while doing all in his power by voice and pen to confirm in the North the passion for freedom, still consistently with his fixed principles preached against violence and urged peace. If it must needs be that the offense of war should come, he was determined that he should not be the man through whom the offense came. It is hard, however, not to think of him as then in a sort of waking trance.

While young Mr. Higginson and Theodore Parker, privy to the counsels of John Brown, were predicting the bloodshed which the older man at least should have striven to prevent, Garrison deprecated the warlike temper now taking possession of that cause which had been baptized in the spirit of peace, and prophesied as a result a declension in the moral power of the Abolitionists.

On the night of October 16, 1859, took place the overt act, the baptism of blood to which Higginson and Parker were looking forward. It is not necessary here to recount the story of the stern night and day at Harper's Ferry, and of the lofty dignity with which Brown endured his trial and met his death. Garrison, on account of his non-resistant views, had not been made the confidant of Brown, when the latter divulged his plans to some Abolitionists, in order to obtain their aid. Garrison and Brown had met two years before in the parlor of Theodore Parker, and had had an argument before a group of listeners on the question of peace, Brown quoting the Old Testament, and Garrison the New, while Parker cited the rebellion of the American colonies against England as an analogy. Brown attended the convention of the New England Anti-Slavery Society at Boston in May, 1859, and said as he went away: "These men are all talk; what is needed is action—action!"

When the news from Harper's Ferry reached Boston, Garrison gave Brown unstinted and deserved praise for honesty, conscientiousness, courage and disinterestedness, and bore witness to Brown's

"deeply religious nature, powerfully wrought upon by the trials through which he had passed." Garrison also testified to Brown's "sincere belief that he had been raised up by God to deliver the oppressed in this country by the way he had chosen," and to the wisdom, dignity, and impressiveness of his answers to the interrogatories addressed to him during his imprisonment and on his trial. No one can fail to recognize the force of Brown's nature, or to be impressed by his noble bearing in the face of death. Yet justice must add to Garrison's favorable outline of his character fanatic ruthlessness, which would "shed no unnecessary blood," but would spill by private assassination or open violence all the blood deemed necessary to the accomplishment of his purpose; ignorance and an uninformed imagination, producing an absurdly inadequate conception of the means required to attain his ends; and narrow unintelligence, which could see in a course of action the one result directly intended, and could not understand that the other inevitable consequences might be those of most importance. Garrison's comments show how he was stirred by Brown's simple and heroic nature. His peace principles were not those of peace at any price, but of the peace of self-sacrifice, fortitude, and martyrdom,—which is nearer to a war of desperate abandonment and devotion than to the peace of cowardice and servility. When taunted as to his non-resistant doctrines, he declared his unshaken faith in their beneficence and glory; but said, "Rather than see men wearing

their chains in a cowardly and servile spirit, I would, as an advocate of peace . . . see them breaking the head of the tyrant with their chains." Hence he wished "success to every slave insurrection."

It is in the last words quoted that Garrison's lack of insight into the nature of Brown's action becomes evident. A rebellion from within of slaves aspiring to be free, Garrison might consistently have sympathized with and respected. Though, on his principles, less worthy than patient resignation, it would have been nobler than cowardly obedience to the inevitable. But the commission of cold-blooded murder in the attempt to incite from without a struggle for freedom among a people too tame even to respond should have been looked upon not only by him but by believers in force as mad and wicked. The whole effort was unreal. The few slaves freed by Brown returned gladly to servile comfort. Douglass's refusal to accompany Brown should have taught at least Brown's educated advisers how hopeless was his project. If on the other hand, the action of Brown had a dramatic element and was intended to impress the world in case the direct object was not attained, the prompt repudiation of it by the Republican leaders proves that it was miscalculated. Brown's acts neither helped nor hindered the cause of freedom. As his slayings at Pottawattomie had no effect but to make the conflict more sanguinary, so his deed at Harper's Ferry freed no negroes, changed no votes, and gave strength to no hesitant souls. It alarmed

the South, producing a crop of Southern violence such that Garrison compiled a tract of a hundred and forty-four pages on the subject, called "The New Reign of Terror." Assuredly, as a non-resistant, Garrison never had a better text for his sermon than in the violence of John Brown.

Garrison's means had been heavily taxed by the anti-slavery hospitality of which his house was inevitably the centre. The obligation to relieve him was felt by some of the Abolitionists to rest upon them as a body; and one of them in particular, Mr. Charles F. Hovey, a man of wealth, contributed liberally to that end. During his life he often sent gifts, small or large, unobtrusively and with delicate kindness. With homely thoughtfulness, he at one time, when Mrs. Garrison had a houseful of guests, sent her a barrel of flour, accompanying it with a graceful note. Mr. Hovey was a generous contributor to the fund with which the house, No. 14 Dix Place, near Hollis Street, in which the Garrisons had been living since 1853, was bought for them in 1855, and notified Garrison that he intended to pay him annually the interest on a sum equal to a legacy designed for him. Garrison accepted the gift, stipulating that the donor should feel at liberty to discontinue it at any time and for any reason, and that it should not be regarded as in any way controlling the liberty of the recipient's thought and speech. At Mr. Hovey's death, which occurred in 1859, he left personal bequests to several of the Abolitionists who had suffered in purse as a result of their devotion, and established

a fund for the support of a number of reforms. The trustees were chosen from the "extreme left" of the Garrisonians.

Toward the end of 1858, Garrison lost his aunt, Mrs. Charlotte Newell, his mother's youngest sister. Since 1854 he had borne the burden of her support, and found the expenses of her last illness a heavy load to carry. It was made lighter by the curious discovery of a forgotten deposit of several hundred dollars which had been placed by Garrison's mother in a savings-bank in Baltimore, and which was paid over to him as the sole heir.

During the years from 1855 to 1860 Garrison's health continued miserable, and he was frequently obliged to give up his work for a time. Throughout nearly the whole of 1860, he was unable to lecture, and for a great part of the year almost unable to write, as the result of a bronchial affection. The financial panic, moreover, pressed very hard on the Garrisons, whose means at best were precarious. Their hospitality and their liberality to their relatives were not the only extraordinary burdens upon them; their hearts were open to the cry of all distress, and from their scanty store they gave freely to the suffering near them and the wretched far away.

Garrison's few articles in the *Liberator* in the year 1860 reiterated his judgment of the Republican party;—that in it was his hope, not so much for what it was as for what it promised to become. On the other hand, the division of the Democratic party on sectional lines was instantly hailed by him.

The election of Lincoln was by this division assured, and the act plainly declared that the South was in earnest in its threats of secession; since, otherwise, the leaders of the party would not have thrown the election to the Republicans. When Lincoln was nominated, Garrison had nothing to say. He admitted to the *Liberator* with reluctance an article by Phillips, inveighing against Lincoln as a "slave-hound of Illinois," for voting in favor of a provision for the return of fugitive slaves from the District of Columbia, as a necessary part in a measure for the abolition of slavery there. Lincoln's own words and the attitude of his party seemed to promise nothing directly in favor of abolition; yet the tone of the South apparently gave assurance that secession was to take place; and secession, as Garrison was convinced, meant, if not in one way, then in another, the end of slavery.

After the election there followed what seemed to Garrison the inevitable reaction. In December a meeting in Boston "in memory of John Brown" was broken up, and a threatening mob followed Wendell Phillips home from the Music Hall, where he had been delivering an address. In Massachusetts and in Congress alike was exhibited a readiness to modify what little had been done toward the ends which Garrison cherished. The Republican party was determined to leave the South no excuse for secession, based on Northern failure to carry out the agreements of the Constitution. It must be obvious that Garrison could not act with or support such a party. The leaders, the rank and

file of men, the whole world had no expectation that the abolition of slavery was to come soon through Republican success. The utmost hoped on one side and feared on the other, was that slavery should be confined within the area which it already occupied, and should in time, perhaps as the result of economic forces, die out. It was believed by many who supported the hopeless candidature of Bell and Everett that within ten years, from prevailing indications, the North would have grown so strong financially and commercially as to convince the South of the futility of any plan of successful withdrawal. The slavery question was to be settled by methods not as yet discernible to human wit.

When the news of the secession of South Carolina reached Massachusetts, Garrison's view of the situation was that now the country could free itself from slavery at a stroke. He had long urged peaceful dissolution; why not now permit a peaceful secession of the slave states, and leave them to reap the fruits of their own sin and folly? Thus, in the *Liberator* of January 4, 1861, he says: "All Union-saving efforts are simply idiotic. At last the 'covenant with death' is annulled and the 'agreement with hell' broken—at least by the action of South Carolina, and ere long by all the slaveholding states, for their doom is one." It was in accordance with these views that on February 15, 1861, he proposed a convention of free states, "called to organize an independent government on free and just principles," maintaining that "to think of whipping the South into subjection, and extorting al-

legiance from four millions of people at the cannon's mouth is utterly chimerical. True, it is in the power of the North to deluge her soil with blood, and inflict upon her the most terrible sufferings; but not to break her spirit or change her determination." He thus saves himself logically and is consistent, but apparently by making the slaves themselves a negligible quantity.

If Garrison's propositions sound chimerical, we must remember that not only Buchanan's administration, but the leaders of the Republican party did not yet put forth a clear policy to meet secession. Garrison, meantime, judged the Republican leaders by standards of statesmanship absolutely incompatible with his own principles of non-resistance, but which do him credit. Of Seward he writes: "In this state of things,—when the elements are melting with fervent heat, and thunders are uttering their voices, and a great earthquake is shaking the land from centre to circumference, threatening to engulf whatever free institutions are yet visible,—Mr. Seward, with the eyes of expectant millions fastened upon him as 'the pilot to weather the storm,' rises in the Senate to utter well-turned periods in glorification of a Union no longer in existence, and to talk of 'meeting prejudice with conciliation, exaction with concession which surrenders no principle (!), and violence with the right hand of peace'! The tiger is to be propitiated by crying 'pussy-cat!' and leviathan drawn out with a hook! The word 'treason' or 'traitors' is never once mentioned—no recital is made of any of the num-

berless outrages committed—no call is made upon the President to be true to his oath, and to meet the public exigency with all the forces at his command —no patriotic indignation flushes his cheek—but all is calm as a summer's morning, cool, compliant, unimpassioned! His boldest word is, 'We already have disorder, and violence is begun.' How very discreet! It is a penny-whistle used to hush down a thunder-storm of the first magnitude—capping Vesuvius with a sheet of straw paper! And this is the statesmanship of William H. Seward, in a crisis unparalleled in our national history! Stand aside! 'The hour' has come, but where is 'the man'?"[1]

Garrison soon felt confident that in Lincoln there was "*a* man," if not "*the* man"; that in him there were the force and insight adequate to meet great occasions, if not to dominate them. Dissatisfied as his views forced him to be with Lincoln's frank declaration of his obedience to the Constitution, he spoke with respect of his dignity and courage at the time of his inauguration, and of his refusal to make concessions to treason or compromises with rebellion. On the other hand, the full measure of Lincoln's transcendent intellectual power and sad and patient greatness was probably never taken by Garrison. His praises sound grudging, and his criticism carping. For example, he says of Lincoln's message in 1862,[2] "It is very evident the President writes all his own messages, for they are all alike bunglingly expressed, and quite discreditable

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 13. [2] *Liberator*, March 14, 1862.

in that particular as official documents." Whether or no this charge against the style of Lincoln's earlier state papers is well grounded, the comment is proof of Garrison's failure to appreciate the remarkable skill and still more remarkable temper of these documents, which combine political tact and statesmanlike depth and power with absolute frankness.

The concussion of the first shot against the works of Sumter may still be felt across the intervening years almost as a physical fact. So forceful a shock was needed to rouse the mighty nation from its slumber, restless as that slumber was, and impel it to put forth its strength on the worthiest occasion and in the greatest conflict the world has known. When the war had once begun, some of the Abolitionists "stood still to see the salvation" which their God was working, and some could perceive no signs of hope or promise. Garrison saw that the tremendous conflict was tending "irresistibly toward the goal of universal emancipation, or else to a separation between the free and slaveholding states." He joined in advising the omission of the anniversary meeting of the American Society, and counseled the Abolitionists to do nothing to thwart or impede the movement of popular feeling against the South. Thus, in the *Liberator* his language for months was far more guarded than usual in its criticism of political conditions and public men. The din of politics had brought to his ears some terrestrial lessons.

The administration of Lincoln had come into power pledged not to interfere with slavery where it existed. As for Lincoln himself, he "disliked slavery and feared emancipation." His duty, moreover, compelled him to hold together all the elements of the Union of which he was the head; and in particular it obliged him not to offend the loyal border slave states. Hence for many months he himself not only did not take any steps toward freeing the slaves, but disavowed and annulled the proceedings of his subordinates looking in that direction. Within two months after Lincoln's inauguration, Garrison called for emancipation under the war power, following the suggestion made long before by John Quincy Adams. For the time being, however, he did not press this demand vigorously. Not until Lincoln's prompt letter of September 11th, revoking the unwise and premature order of Frémont emancipating the slaves of rebels in arms in Missouri, did Garrison comment unfavorably on the President's course. Then, printing the letter within heavy black rules, he charged the President with a "serious dereliction of duty."

To Lincoln's message at the end of the year he gave no praise except for recommending the recognition of the independence of Hayti and Liberia. As the year 1862 advanced, Garrison felt that the time had come to make stronger efforts to organize public opinion in favor of emancipation as a war measure, and wrote and circulated a memorial to Congress, urging the unconditional emancipation of the slaves of rebels, and emancipation with com-

pensation of the slaves of loyal citizens. In an editorial addressed to the President and his Cabinet, he declared, tastelessly italicizing the words: "*To refuse to deliver these captive millions who are legally in your power, is tantamount to the crime of their original enslavement;* and their blood shall a righteous God require at your hands." [1] He devoted his editorials more and more to the cause of immediate emancipation, and at the end of the year replaced the old motto,—"The United States Constitution is a covenant with death and an agreement with hell," with a new one,—"Proclaim liberty throughout the land, and to all the inhabitants thereof."

The outbreak of the war by increasing prices, disturbing finances, and engrossing the attention of the public, had greatly diminished the support given to anti-slavery journals. It was proposed to unite the *Standard* and the *Liberator* in order to keep both alive; but Garrison, doubtful as it was whether the *Liberator* could be maintained, was determined not to compromise his freedom by any such alliance. The excitement and hopeful anticipation of the year seem to have affected his health favorably. He attended the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society at West Chester, in the heart of Pennsylvania Quakerdom, and spent a day or two on the way in New York, where he was kindly received by people who had previously shown him little sympathy, and another day in Philadelphia among a circle of Quakers, between whom and himself had long subsisted bonds of close association. This year he lost

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 35.

his old friend Francis Jackson, who left bequests to various reforms and a personal legacy to Garrison.

In the first part of 1862, though Congress had given proof of growing anti-slavery tendencies throughout the North, the administration showed no sign of heeding the cry for emancipation. In March, Lincoln made the suggestion that the Federal government might coöperate with any state desiring to accept a system of gradual emancipation, —a step hailed with enthusiasm by Phillips, but with contempt by Garrison, who saw in every postponement of the final act a needless and fatuous compromise with sin. Congress by many acts continued to advance the cause of freedom in detail; but the President again cast down the abolitionist hopes. In May, when Major-General David Hunter issued a military order, abolishing slavery in the Department of the South, including Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, Lincoln sent a message revoking the order even before he had official notice. Garrison asked him the same question he had put to Seward, "Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook?" Lincoln still urged his plan of gradual emancipation, combining with it the permission to individual states to elect immediate emancipation, and a scheme for colonizing the negroes. The Border States would have none of it, and the President, feeling the growing strength of the sentiment in favor of emancipation, warned their representatives that they had better accept such an offer before it was too late, for their system would be likely to perish "by mere friction and

abrasion" if the war continued. Representative colored men, on the other hand, decisively repudiated the idea of colonization. Garrison heaped scorn upon it as "puerile, absurd, illogical, impertinent, untimely." Finally, in September, 1862, seventeen months after the fall of Sumter, the President issued his proclamation emancipating all slaves in the regions which should be in rebellion on the first of January following. The Border States were not included, and plans for gradual emancipation and for colonization were embodied in the proclamation.

Through the long period of waiting, Garrison, though he urged the President to action and criticized his delay, did all he could to prevent abolition societies from condemning the administration. He perceived and stated with vigor some of the grounds why emancipation should be put off until public opinion should be consolidated in its favor, and expressed confidence in the general rightness of the President's purposes, unnecessarily timid and cautious though he thought him. When taunted about his new political views, he replied wittily: "You remember what Benedick in the play says: 'When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.' And when I said I would not sustain the Constitution, because it was 'a covenant with death and an agreement with hell,' I had no idea that I should live to see death and hell secede."[1]

In the same spirit he strove to make English sympathizers with abolition perceive that the in-

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 40.

evitable result of Northern success would be emancipation, whether the North willed it or not;—that the South was fighting for slavery, and that the North, whatever its declared objects, was fighting for freedom, and had a right to the support of the emancipationists of all the world. The sole determining force which withheld the British government from recognizing the Confederacy, and prevented the equipping of more and more dangerous "Alabamas" was the anti-slavery sentiment of the non-conformist middle class. Effective organization was given to this sentiment by the abolitionist societies, largely of Garrison's planting, and mostly directed by his friends and associates. It is just, therefore, as his sons suggest,[1] to attribute to him an important part in the formation of the English public opinion which was so valuable an indirect support to the Union cause.

Garrison welcomed the proclamation as a step in the right direction, but felt no real enthusiasm for it. It was after all simply a war measure,—a means of weakening the enemy, not the tardy righting of a great wrong. The President was still proposing compensated emancipation in the loyal Border States, and avowed his desire to postpone it in those states for a long period. He suggested 1900 as an appropriate date, and avoided giving any approval to the abolition of slavery in the loyal states except by voluntary action of the states cooperating with the general government. Garrison's judgment of Lincoln's cautious policy was ex-

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 66.

pressed in a letter to his daughter: "The President can do nothing for freedom except by circumlocution and delay. How prompt was his action against Frémont and Hunter!" Garrison had not before him the information which proves that Lincoln issued the proclamation at the earliest moment and in the most decisive terms practicable, without losing that support from the public opinion of the North which was requisite to making the act of emancipation really effective. As it was, the reactionary storm which followed the proclamation seemed for a time likely to overturn the Republican majority in Congress, and to put back the cause of emancipation further than ever. Yet Garrison's impatient criticism is not to be blamed. As Lincoln's delay until public opinion should be ready to accept emancipation was a part of his duty in his capacity as a public servant, so Garrison's demands for immediate and extreme action were a part of his function as a maker of that future public opinion to which the President sagaciously appealed now, as he had earlier appealed during the famous debates of 1858.

Toward the end of the year 1863 it became necessary to resort to the draft to supply soldiery. Garrison, as the foremost of the non-resistant Abolitionists, was called on to express his views of their duty under the circumstances. First, he vindicated for non-resistants the same exemption from military service accorded in some places to Quakers; but he insisted that the right to claim this exemption belonged to no one who by voting became a part of a

government based on force. If a genuine non-resistant were drafted, it was his duty to suffer fine and imprisonment, but he had no right to hire a substitute. If his fine, however, were used to employ a soldier in his place, that was none of his concern. As to Abolitionists who were not non-resistants on principle, but who refrained from voting on account of the pro-slavery clauses in the Constitution, Garrison declared that as the government was and must be on the side of liberty, it should "receive the sanction and support of every Abolitionist [*i. e.*, of every fighting Abolitionist] whether in a moral or a military point of view."

The new respect in which Abolitionists were held gave Garrison an opportunity to reach new auditors. One of the pleasantest manifestations of the change was an invitation,—the first of the kind he had ever received,—to address the Adelphic Union of Williams College, August 4, 1862. At the address hardly any of the faculty were present, except Prof. John Bascom, a man of reforming temper and moral force, who later suffered for his activity in favor of prohibition, and who is alive at the time of this writing in venerable age. The very success of the abolition cause made it more and more difficult to keep up the abolition societies and papers. Some Abolitionists of influence believed that if Garrison and Wendell Phillips were to make public addresses and to confer with political leaders, they would achieve more than through the societies. Some withheld their support from the established vehicles of agitation; and Garrison in the first part

of the year 1862 was urged to go to Washington, where Phillips was received with marked attention. Unfortunately he caught a severe cold in February, 1862, at an anti-slavery convention at Albany, and was unable for several months to travel. At the May meeting of the American Society in New York, and of the Massachusetts Society in Boston, which he attended, the number of Abolitionists present was smaller than ever before, but the addresses attracted large and enthusiastic audiences of non-Abolitionists.

The carrying into effect of the Emancipation Proclamation on the appointed day, January 1, 1863, was celebrated by Garrison with a full sense of the historic importance of the great event. His efforts were now put forth in favor of the abolition of slavery in the loyal Border States, and of the establishment of institutions to care for and educate the freedmen; resolutions on both subjects were adopted at several meetings which he attended. The usual May meeting was held in New York, but the attendance was even smaller than the year before. The public received the Abolitionists kindly. At a meeting where Garrison spoke, the mayor of New York sat on the platform, and when Garrison entered he was received with bursts of applause. "What a change!" he writes, " . . . and remember, this was a meeting called by the Sixteenth Republican Ward Association!" In spite of the small attendance, it was felt that the society must continue until its work was done.

The results of the elections held during the year,

on the whole, ratified the policy of emancipation; and in the Border States local parties in favor of immediate emancipation showed vigor. In Maryland and Missouri these parties proved to be in the majority at the elections. Yet the administration refused to encourage them, and the President still argued in favor of gradual emancipation and threw the weight of his influence against the Missouri party. Moreover, the Emancipation Proclamation had reduced though it had not destroyed the Republican majorities, and even for the gradual abolition policy of the President it was still impossible to obtain sufficient political support. The American Anti-Slavery Society, therefore, which met at Philadelphia, December 3d and 4th, 1863, still felt that it had something to live for.

The greater part of the meeting was given up to reminiscences by the older members of the society. Most delightful of all the experiences of the meeting to Garrison was the reunion of the estranged factions of the abolitionist body. Either personally or by letter not only "Old Organization" Abolitionists of the radical school, like Phillips and Garrison, but "New Organizers," like his old friend Arthur Tappan, politicians grown old in the warfare, such as Giddings, converts from Garrisonianism, like Frederick Douglass, and the new political Abolitionists, like B. Gratz Brown, the leader of the Missouri abolition party, all united in the rejoicings. Douglass spoke impressively for confidence in Lincoln, and Garrison recalled the name of Lundy for veneration and regard.

The emancipation of the slaves was closely connected with the enlistment of negroes in the Union armies. The policy of utilizing the great military force of the negro population had been urged from the beginning of the war, on principle by the anti-slavery men, and as a military necessity by various generals and by Simon Cameron when Secretary of War. The government was loath to arm the blacks. It distrusted them, and it feared to excite antagonism by such a step. Hence, though the enlistment of negroes was made legal in 1862, it was not until 1863, after the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued, that the policy was entered upon in earnest. Enlistment in the case of a slave naturally carried with it the emancipation of the enlisted man and of his family, and thus had the practical effect of extending military emancipation into the Border States. Indeed, military emancipation and the enlistment of negroes had from the first been associated as two aspects of a possible strategic necessity in Lincoln's mind. Massachusetts was the first Northern state to enlist a volunteer regiment of negroes, the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts. The colonel, Robert Gould Shaw, and a number of the other officers, were sons of Garrison's friends, and had been playmates of his children. The negro rank and file faced slavery if captured; the young white officers ignominy, a dishonorable death and an unmarked grave. The heroism which was blithely ready to meet such a future as well as the common perils of warfare deeply impressed Garrison; and when his own son, George

T. Garrison, who did not share his father's non-resistant views and who had been anxious to enter the army after the Emancipation Proclamation, eagerly grasped an offer of a commission as second lieutenant in the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts, the second regiment of negroes, the father accepted his decision gravely and respectfully, though sadly.

As the first black regiment, with its flashing eyes and its soldierly march, passed by on its way to the front, Garrison stood to watch it from the corner of Wilson's Lane, now Devonshire Street, at a spot over which he had been dragged by the mob in 1835, and within a few feet of the scene of the Boston Massacre in 1770 when negro blood was shed. Before the regiment in which his son was an officer was ready to depart, the draft riots in New York and the anti-negro riots in Detroit occurred. There was danger of disturbance in Boston. The Garrisons thought it safest to leave their house for a day or two; and the soldiers, instead of parading on the Common, were marched straight to the transport which was to carry them to Charleston. The father keenly felt the lack of opportunity to bid his son farewell and to give him his blessing, and wrote to tell how he had tried to reach him. "Multitudes, with myself, were greatly disappointed that the regiment did not parade on the Common, where we all expected to take our farewell leave. I followed you, however, all the way down to the vessel, hoping to speak to you; but I found myself on the wrong side, and the throng was so great and the marching so continuous that I

could not press my way through. After you were all on board, I went with a number of friends to the next wharf below, where we waited more than an hour, hoping to see you off and to give you our parting salute. But the rain poured heavily down, and we were all compelled to beat a retreat—keenly regretting that we could not, even from a distance, shout farewell." [1]

Some choice legends have gathered about Garrison's fame; one is that the name he bore was not his real one; another is to the effect that he repudiated this militant son on account of his own non-resistant creed. His simple, manly words as given above are a sufficient answer to the latter charge. There are other equally absurd statements concerning him, not worth refutation, yet curious as showing how a mythus develops even from so simple and straightforward a career as his.

Near the end of December, 1863, Garrison's wife, who had been his support and consolation, his prudent counselor and the wise regulator of his impulses, was without warning stricken with paralysis of the entire left side. The day before, she had presented the appearance of blooming health, and had displayed her usual energy in works of charity by soliciting aid for the freedmen among friends. It would not have been strange if the activity and anxiety of her life had earlier broken down even her strong constitution. The restrictions put upon her by the smallness and uncertainty of the income for her household had been

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 83.

severe even in the provision made for the ordinary expenses of her numerous family, to say nothing of the extraordinary disbursements to which her husband's position obliged him. If it had not been for Mrs. Garrison's perfect health, extremely systematic habits, and severe economy, debt would certainly have overwhelmed Garrison and forced him to discontinue the *Liberator*, and greatly to curtail his anti-slavery activity. Naturally, concerned as she was with the detail of fact, and careful of the future, she was at times perturbed and perplexed. Her caution was useful to her husband, sanguine by temperament and faith; while he took the load from her heart and brought smiles to her lips by his cheer. She gave some system to her husband's disorderly activity and helped him to carry on his work in a businesslike way. In addition to all her labor and responsibility, she was beset with constant anxiety as to her husband's safety. The calm courage which he showed before a mob was easier than cheerfulness under the anxiety hanging over the quiet household during his long and frequent absences. Even when Garrison was at home this fear was never quite gone. He constantly received letters of anonymous menace, and the passage between his home and his office did not always seem safe. On occasions like that of the Rynders mob, when Garrison deliberately faced danger and even death, Mrs. Garrison's anxiety was of course poignant. Withal, she was devoted to the cause to which her husband had devoted himself, and was ready to offer herself to

suffering and him to danger rather than to give up the great work. As is not infrequently the case with persons who enjoy superabundant health, her first illness was like an earthquake shock, shattering her frame.

She lived eleven years, patient and cheerful, dependent for care upon her husband and their only daughter. Her sons tell of her once needing a handkerchief, and of taking her skirt in her teeth and dragging herself up-stairs, in order to avoid disturbing her daughter, who was putting her baby to bed.

Mrs. Garrison's illness of course severely taxed the strength of Garrison, no longer in youthful vigor. Toward the end of January, however, he was once more able to attend meetings of the anti-slavery societies. The certainty that slavery would soon disappear from American soil took away what had been the soul of Abolitionism. Was it still necessary for those who fought in the cause of freedom, never to be fully won, to come out and be separate; or could they now act upon public sentiment through the ordinary channels? Upon this question the small remnant of the anti-slavery organizations was once more rent in twain, and Garrison for the first time found himself in a conservative minority as to a vital point in the societies of which he had been the master spirit. The initial form of the contest was a skirmish over the question of supporting Lincoln for reëlection. Phillips and others distrusted his purposes as to the treatment of the freedmen. Lincoln desired to rehabilitate the se-

ceded states, not as conquered provinces, but as integral parts of the Union, and sought for elements out of which a representative government could grow by natural processes. All Abolitionists desired guarantees that slavery should not be insidiously reintroduced under some specious name, and that the freedmen should not be exposed to the oppression or revenge of their late masters, or to the enmity of the "poor whites." Phillips already demanded the suffrage for them, as their only means of defense. Garrison had come to believe in the righteousness of Lincoln's purposes, and regarded the support of him as obligatory upon Abolitionists; since for him to fail of reëlection would be in effect a condemnation of the emancipation policy. At the same time, he hesitated to approve his method of reconstruction. Hence, when Phillips proposed in January to declare that the "government was *ready* to sacrifice the honor and interest of the North to secure a sham peace," Garrison would have said that the government was "*in danger*" of so doing. He was unwilling to follow Phillips in charging the President with perfidy. The vote which was taken was a test of the strength of the new factions within the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, in which the resolutions were proposed, and resulted unfavorably to Garrison's views by a small majority. Throughout the year 1864, Phillips kept up his attack on Lincoln for his readiness to reconstruct the states without negro suffrage. Expressing his sorrow for Garrison's course, he said: "A million dollars would have been a cheap pur-

chase for the administration of the *Liberator's* article on the presidency." Phillips went so far as to become a delegate to the Massachusetts State Republican Convention, held in May, in order that he might oppose the election to the national convention of delegates in favor of Lincoln, and spoke against resolutions endorsing the President's administration. The convention swept over him, and adopted the resolutions by acclamation. His bitterness led him to the grotesque folly at the New England Anti-Slavery Convention of charging the President with "carrying on the war to reëlect himself, to conciliate the disloyal white man."[1] Phillips, Stephen S. Foster, Abby Kelley Foster and Parker Pillsbury, Garrison's old anti-clerical associates, were the chief supporters of the attack on the administration. Garrison, with H. C. Wright and George Thompson, who had come again to America in February, steadily opposed them; and when a convention of Radicals, including Phillips, nominated General Frémont at a convention held in Cleveland on May 31st, Garrison called attention to the fact that this nomination had been made in the face of the existence not only of the war, but of a wide-spread "Copperhead" conspiracy in the North, and asserted that there never was a more abortive or a more ludicrous gathering, politically speaking, than the Cleveland convention. It will be remembered that though Frémont accepted the nomination in a letter full of bitter words against Lincoln, he later withdrew, his judgment convincing him, after the

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 110.

publication of the Democratic platform in August, that only by the union of all factions of the Republican party could the safety of the country against either disunion or slavery be assured. Of the insignificant candidacy of Frémont Garrison spoke with contempt.

Garrison was a spectator at the Republican convention held in Baltimore, on June 7th and 8th. The nomination was unanimous from the beginning, except that the radical Missouri delegates, dissatisfied with Lincoln's failure to support abolition in the loyal Border States, voted once for Grant and then changed their vote. "When the result was announced," Garrison wrote, "the enthusiasm was indescribable; and yet it was not comparable with the electric outbreak which followed the adoption of the following resolution: '3. Resolved, That as slavery was the cause and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and as it must be always and everywhere hostile to the principles of republican government, justice and the national safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the republic; and that we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the government, in its own defense, has aimed a death-blow at this gigantic evil. We are in favor, furthermore, of such an amendment to the Constitution, to be made by the people in conformity with its provisions, as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of slavery within the limits or the jurisdiction of the United States.'" [1]

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 113.

Garrison rejoiced, and might well rejoice, that he was present when this resolution was adopted. In the account of the convention which he published in the *Liberator*, he described the joyful enthusiasm of the delegates when the vote was taken, and asked: "Was not a spectacle like that rich compensation for more than thirty years of universal personal opprobrium, bitter persecution, and murderous outlawry?" As he watched the enthusiastic delegates shouting and shaking hands, his mind traveled back not only over his own long and bitter struggle, but over the history of the whole abolition movement. Not he alone, but all who had braved contempt and abuse for so many years in the contest with slavery were at last vindicated. He had beheld, as he thought in still more solemn mood, "the vindication of Eternal Truth and Justice."

The journey to Baltimore was the first Garrison had made to that city since his imprisonment there. The old jail was torn down, and he was disappointed in his expectation of being able to visit the cell in which he had been confined. From Baltimore he went on to Washington. Lincoln received him cordially, and when Garrison told him how difficult he had found it to approve the President's course until the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation, he explained the grounds of his policy of delay. It was at his suggestion, as he informed Garrison, that the resolution in favor of the Thirteenth Amendment had been proposed to the Republican convention. By the passage of the amendment, the emancipation of the slaves would be put beyond

question and beyond the possibility of being jeopardized by his death or failure to be re-elected.

Even at this time, when the final success of the Union armies seemed certain, and the policy of emancipation had been warmly approved by the great majority of the people of the North, the Thirteenth Amendment failed to secure the necessary two-thirds vote in Congress; and only by the most strenuous efforts and against the opposition of prominent Republicans were the Fugitive Slave Laws repealed. The reëlection of Lincoln, however, was an endorsement of his policy of the utmost practical moment, and was hailed with gratification by Garrison and the great majority of the Abolitionists.

At the end of the year, the constant problem of maintaining the *Liberator* came up with more urgency than ever. The cost of paper had increased again. The Hovey Fund Committee, the majority of whom were extreme Abolitionists once called Garrisonian, had cut off their subscription for a hundred copies, on the ground that the paper had become a Republican organ. Others assumed the burden, some new friends came forward, and it was resolved to continue until the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment should crown the long struggle with formal and final success. Garrison had also again to decline an invitation to merge the *Liberator* and the *Standard*. He was determined to keep his paper independent to the last, in order, as he wrote to Oliver Johnson, the editor of the

Standard, to retain "its historic position and moral prestige" unimpaired.

The triumph of the Northern arms was rapidly approaching, and with it came what was to Garrison the greater triumph of the cause to which he had devoted his life. In both fields, that of arms and that of morals, each advancing step was the ground of public rejoicing. Hence the first few months of the year 1865 were a continuous festival, suddenly interrupted by the murder of the President. On the 31st of January the Thirteenth Amendment at last received the requisite two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives, and was ready to be submitted for ratification to the states. To Garrison this event not only was glorious in itself, but was a testimony that he was no longer a stranger and an outcast among his countrymen. Many pleasant attentions were shown him. He was invited to deliver an address on Washington's Birthday before the citizens of his native town of Newburyport. His political assistance was sought by prominent personages, one asking him to support Governor Andrew's claims to a place in the Cabinet. He was recognized as a political force by the administration, and the Secretary of War wrote to him personally to explain some misinterpreted proceedings.

After the fall of Charleston, which took place on the 18th of February, the steps of the auction block in the old slave mart of that city were sent to Boston with other relics, to be exhibited at meetings held for the benefit of the freedmen. From

these steps Garrison spoke at the first of these meetings, on the 9th of March, eliciting wild applause and happy enthusiasm. That he should have rejoiced to mount the steps and to speak surrounded by evidences that in America slavery was no more, was right and proper. Yet it may justly cause some pain that he trod on a captured Confederate flag, used to carpet the symbolic rostrum. With his feelings on the subjects of war and slavery and secession, and in the mood of the time, this, too, was natural; but a delicate mind would grieve to be guilty of contumeliously affronting a conquered and gallant foe. That flag had been carried in one of the most calamitously ill-judged of wars and in one of the most perverse of causes, but it had been followed by brave and noble men, who, however misguided, gave life itself as a proof of their devotion to this, in their eyes, sacred symbol.

The season of festivities reached its culmination in an invitation to be present as a guest of the government at the ceremony of raising the Stars and Stripes on Fort Sumter on April 14th, the fourth anniversary of the surrender. The voyage was entrancingly calm and beautiful, and the company carefully selected and congenial,—all, so Garrison tells us, of one mind as to reconstruction and nobody stiff in his manners. George Thompson occupied a stateroom with Garrison. On the day of the celebration, the vessels in Charleston harbor were dressed with flaunting flags, the artillery of the forts and war-ships thundered their most solemn salutes, and the banner of the Union floated every-

where except over Sumter. Major-General Robert Anderson, who as major had hauled down the flag, had the privilege of raising again the same shot-smitten banner. Henry Ward Beecher delivered the principal address. On the fifteenth, the morning on which Lincoln died, a party including Garrison visited the tomb of Calhoun. As they stood beside the burial-place of him who had been brain and nerve to the institution which Garrison had spent his life in combating, Garrison laid his hand on the tombstone, and said: "Down into a deeper grave than this slavery has gone, and for it there is no resurrection."

To Garrison the freedmen were of more interest than anything else to be seen during his journey; and he took every opportunity to address them, rejoicing with them and rousing them to great excitement. The most impressive of the festival meetings of the blacks was held in Charleston. In the course of it a negro, Samuel Dickerson by name, bringing forward his little daughters, who carried bouquets, expressed to Garrison and his coadjutors the thanks of a multitude of negroes whose families had been restored to them and whose family life had been made safe and honorable, so it was hoped, by the instrumentality of the lovers of freedom. Garrison, accepting the flowers, replied with much feeling. Among other things he said: "God is my witness!—I have faithfully tried, in the face of the fiercest opposition and under the most depressing circumstances, to make your cause my cause; my wife and children your wives and children, subject

to the same outrage and degradation; myself on the same auction-block to be sold to the highest bidder. . . . While God gives me reason and strength, I shall demand for you everything I claim for the whitest of the white in this country." [1] Later on the same day, when he visited his son in camp, he for the first time saw some negro field-hands, and was overwhelmed at the spectacle of their simple and good-natured but brutally unintelligent faces, and their forms, many of them clad in sacks, with bare arms and legs. For their condition he naturally but unjustly held slavery wholly answerable. How dread the responsibility then and now resting upon state and nation for these poor creatures, so near to ancestors violently snatched from barbarism or savagery, who in degrading the whole life of the South and through it of the country, have brought the punishment for their wrongs upon those who held them in bondage. As the *Arago*, the little vessel on which Beecher, Garrison, and Thompson embarked, intending to go on to Florida, lay at the wharf ready to depart, throngs of freedmen brought flowers in heaps as gifts, with little delicacies, and another festival was held on the wharf, Dickerson again kneeling there and holding the flag over the heads of his children as the vessel steamed down the harbor.

The news of Lincoln's death, received at Beaufort, broke off the journey at once; and the company turned back, changed quickly to another vessel on the way, and went on with such haste that

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 148.

there was only an hour's coal left in the bunkers when the steamer reached New York. Intense as was the grief and horror of the whole nation in the days succeeding Lincoln's assassination, there can have been no deeper gloom anywhere than in that ship's company, who had set out in such joy and were now sailing back appalled by what they had heard, beyond the reach of information, and tortured by all kinds of anxiety, not only as to the strength of the government, but as to the whole condition of the country. From New York they silently dispersed to their homes, relieved of their worst fears, but still overcome with sadness.

In the anti-slavery societies the question involved in the discussions as to the propriety of supporting Lincoln had come up this year in a more intense form than before. Garrison was convinced that the nation was really converted to a detestation of slavery. He was also sure that the North in the reconstruction of the Southern states would insist on "guarantees for the protection of the freedmen"; that is, would give them the suffrage, protect them by force of arms, and withhold from those who had led in the government of the Confederate states opportunities to regain control of the state governments. No doubt his journeys and his acquaintance with politicians had some influence in making him feel greater confidence in "the world's people." The more radical Abolitionists could not share his faith. Led by Phillips, they insisted that the situation still required activity on the part of the anti-slavery societies in support of

negro suffrage, and assailed the political leaders of the day with uncompromising severity. At the Massachusetts meeting in January, Garrison declared his belief that the special work of the society was done, and proposed a resolution that it should dissolve upon the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. His resolution was laid upon the table, while the obloquy cast upon public men in the discussion so grieved and shocked him that he absented himself from the meeting during its later days. At the May meeting of the American Society Garrison introduced resolutions reaching to the heart of the question, to the effect that there was no longer any ground for Abolitionists to stand aloof from their countrymen, and that the society should close its existence with the meeting then in session. Phillips called upon the members for renewed activity until the liberty of the negroes should be placed beyond peril, and in his speeches referred slightingly to the philanthropic agencies for the education and assistance of the freedmen. He and others spoke as if discontinuing the society were tantamount to abandoning the negro, and as if proposing to do so were treachery to the cause of freedom. Garrison met the argument that the society was still needed for the defense of the free negroes by asserting that the society was founded as an anti-slavery society, and that all its activity on behalf of the free negro had been but incidental to its main object. As an abolition society it became absurd, now that slavery was abolished. With statesmanlike wisdom he concluded: "It is

ludicrous for us, a mere handful of people with little means, with no agents in the field, no longer separate, and swallowed up in the great ocean of popular feeling against slavery, to assume that we are of special importance, and that we ought not to dissolve our association, under such circumstances, lest the nation should go to ruin!" [1]

By a vote of one hundred and eighty-one to forty-eight Garrison's resolutions were rejected, and the continuation of the society was determined upon. Even after Garrison's words, the nominating committee brought in his name for the presidency. When he declined to serve, Phillips was chosen. The society adopted by a rising vote a warm tribute to Garrison, which he accepted with grateful words, and thus his connection with the American Anti-Slavery Society, which he had helped to form, into which he had breathed the breath of life, and of which he had been the constant inspirer and for twenty-two years the president, was brought to an end. This society had been the centre of the anti-slavery agitation of the country, the vehicle of light and heat on the subject, the creator of sentiment, the fly-wheel which kept the momentum of individual zeal from being lost and wasted. Its end was to Garrison's mind accomplished; but as his sons suggest,[2] to many it was an end in itself. The excitement, the warmth of comradeship in the cause, the sense of superiority to a thoughtless world enticed some into delight with merely continuing the form.

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 158. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

From this time on to the close of the year, Garrison had resting on his shoulders merely the continuation of the paper and the performance of his duties in connection with the Freedman's Aid Commission, a consolidation of the most important associations for the benefit of the freedmen, just brought about by the energy of J. M. McKim. For eight or ten weeks he enjoyed the unusual happiness of being uninterruptedly at home with nothing but the regular sequence of his editorial duties to engage his attention. Then he was obliged to begin again a round of travel. One lecture tour was undertaken to replenish the almost empty treasury of the *Liberator*, that he might carry out his promise to continue the paper to the end of the year. Traveling was torture to him because of his suffering from hoarseness and ophthalmia ; yet he had the satisfaction of making fifteen hundred dollars—more than his year's salary—in a single month. On this journey, the longest of all his journeys in the United States, he saw the Mississippi, at Quincy, Ill. His friends, Charles K. Whipple, Edmund Quincy, and Samuel May, Jr., undertook the editorial supervision of the paper during his absence.

On his return, early in December, he hoped for the few remaining weeks of the year to devote all his time to the *Liberator*, but was summoned to New York and Philadelphia by imperative business. While he was engaged in the act of delivering a lecture in the latter city, the final ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment was announced.

Garrison instantly hastened home to get the proclamation into the *Liberator*, and to celebrate the official declaration of the victory of the principles to which he had given heart, hope, health, friends, money, his all for more than thirty-five years of his life. He wrote his valedictory editorial in such haste that the copy was taken from his desk a few lines at a time to be put in type. When all but the final paragraph had been set up and adjusted in the chase, he himself took up the composing-stick, finished the work, and set his take in the space left for it. The group about the table watched silently and gravely as the form was locked, and the last number of the *Liberator*, bearing the date of December 29, 1865, went to press. The type, just as it was set, is in the safe keeping of the Boston Public Library.

CHAPTER XIV

LAST YEARS

THOUGH Garrison could calmly and even cheerfully bring the *Liberator* to an end, his life, after he had bid farewell to this companion of thirty-five years, at first seemed empty; and for some weeks he mechanically followed his established routine of visiting the office and clipping the exchanges day by day. But toward the end of January, 1866, he slipped on an icy pavement and fell heavily, almost paralyzing his right arm and shoulder for a time. In the middle of the year he fell again on the same side while running to catch a car—a habit of his, in conformity with his general practice of putting off small matters and sometimes great ones until the last minute. The result of the accident was a painful injury, which prevented him from writing for the rest of the year and put an end to the project, with which he had dallied, of composing a history of abolition. His life passed for the time not unpleasantly. The house in which he lived and to which he had removed from Dix Street, Boston, in August, 1864, stood in an agreeably retired situation on Highland Street, Roxbury. The street was twenty-five feet below, at the foot of the terraced grounds; and from the upper windows the view swept out over the harbor and from the valley near at hand to the bold and noble contours of the en-

closing hills. A fine ledge of rocks near by gave the little estate of half an acre its name,—"Rockledge." This latest homestead of the great Abolitionist is now, appropriately, the St. Monica Home for sick colored women and children.

The fresh air, the quiet, and the privacy were most beneficial to Garrison's health. He solaced his evenings with whist, which he played with a naive enthusiasm more delightful to a lover of his kind than to an expert in the game. He was able to give more time than ever to the care of his wife. His household was made glad, also, by the birth, on June 14, 1866, of his first grandchild, Agnes, the daughter of his son William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., who had married Ellen Wright at Auburn, N. Y., September 14, 1864. Yet, in spite of his domestic happiness, he could not but feel anxious for the future. He had little in the way of worldly possessions, except the house in which he lived. He was in impaired health, perhaps permanently disabled, and was obliged to care for an invalid wife. At this anxious time, a number of men whose names form a roll of honor for themselves and for the recipient of their bounty, subscribed to a fund raised as a testimonial of their appreciation of Garrison's services to the country and to the world. The signatures represented the whole North and West, from Maine to Oregon, and from Missouri to Minnesota. They included names of men eminent in many callings, but especially the "intellectuals" of America and England. The fund, which owed its success to the assiduity and energy of the Rev.

Samuel May, Jr., reached a total of over $30,000. It was tendered to Garrison in 1868, and was accepted by him with dignified and generous gratitude for the spirit which prompted the gift.

In 1867, Garrison was able to gratify a desire, cherished for some years, to visit England once more. His daughter had married Henry Villard, then a newspaper correspondent, in January, 1866. The Villards had gone abroad, taking with them Garrison's youngest son; and Mr. Villard was employed as correspondent from the French Exposition. Garrison took a child's delight in the gay shops and beautiful scenes of Paris, and visited the Exposition again and again with unflagging eagerness. In England he was at once fatigued and gratified by a multitude of addresses and public entertainments tendered him as a representative of the movement for freedom in America. By Englishmen liberty was more prized than union; and Garrison as the leader in the cause of emancipation for its own sake was in the eyes of many the foremost American. A public breakfast given in London in his honor was made noteworthy by one of John Bright's simplest and most beautiful speeches, and by the public acknowledgment of Earl Russell, best known to us as Lord John Russell, that as premier he had made the mistake in the earlier years of the war of misunderstanding the direction in which the struggle was tending. More impressive and more welcome still was an address from the working men of North Shields. These were representatives of that great body of British

craftsmen who, by their devotion to the cause of liberty when they were confronted with starvation, reached the loftiest moral level ever attained by such a body of men. For they were not stimulated by proximity to the evil, or excited by conflict, or urged on by patriotism, or sustained by religious fervor, but afar and in quiet patiently suffered misery for themselves, their wives and little ones, in loyalty to the sublime idea of freedom.

Yet more delightful to Garrison than any of these public honors was meeting with old friends. Among them was Mazzini, whom Garrison warmly loved and deeply venerated. It was twenty-five years since they had met; and Mazzini's noble face and form now bore the marks of thought and travail and imprisonment. Garrison was shocked by his emaciated and broken appearance. Learning that Mazzini's health had been injured by excessive smoking, and that he was trying to make a gradual reduction in the number of the cigars which he daily consumed, Garrison besought him with friendly frankness and tenderness to "go in for immediate and unconditional emancipation." "Nothing," Garrison writes, "could be more respectful, more sweet, more gentle than the manner in which he received my entreaty." [1]

In August Garrison was present as a delegate at the meeting of the International Anti-Slavery Conference at Paris, lamenting that he could not understand the French and Spanish speakers, and declaring "his abiding faith in the feasibility of a

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 195.

universal language, at some period or other." After the conference Garrison went on a tour through the western Alps and then down the Rhine. Richard D. Webb, who was his traveling companion for three weeks, gives an interesting impression of him at this time: "He is the most delightful man I have ever known—magnanimous, generous, considerate, and as far as I can see, every way morally excellent. I can perceive that he has large faith, is very credulous, is not deeply read, and has little of the curiosity or thirst for knowledge which educated people are prone to. But, take him for all in all, I know no such other man." [1]

Soon after his return to America, he was invited to write for the New York *Independent*. This brilliant journal, conducted by orthodox Congregationalists, had an evangelical trend, but was edited with broad liberality and not as a denominational organ. Though it had long supported the anti-slavery movement, it was opposed to all forms of "come-outerism"; but with the abolition of slavery accomplished, and with the new feeling of the North as to Southern conditions, Garrison was a welcome contributor. The articles were signed, and individuality was encouraged in the contributors, who made up a distinguished company. Among the clerical writers were Howard Crosby, Philip Schaff, Horace Bushnell, Washington Gladden, and Theodore L. Cuyler; Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Susan Coolidge, and J. T. Trowbridge contributed stories; Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Charles Dudley Warner

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 232 *n*.

essays of a distinctly literary type; Lucy Larcom and "H. H." verse; Charles Kingsley and "Père Hyacinthe" foreign correspondence; and a great variety of less frequent contributors spiced the paper with occasional extremism, among them the Rev. C. G. Finney and Garrison himself. Garrison accepted the invitation with pleasure, and wrote pretty frequently for five years, from 1868 to 1872, and intermittently for three years longer.

The first subject which occupied his pen was the reconstruction of the Southern states. It will be remembered that, although Garrison would not join in condemning Lincoln when Phillips called on the anti-slavery societies to reprobate the President's policy with reference to the readmission of the seceded states, he still expressed disapproval of any plan of reconstruction which did not recognize the negro as free and equal; that is, as entitled to the suffrage and to federal protection in the exercise of it. No doubt he would have been a vigorous opponent of the presidential policy if Lincoln had lived to carry it out; and what he would not have tolerated in Lincoln he abominated in Johnson. All of Johnson's obvious faults were peculiarly hateful to Garrison,—his self-assertion, his truculence, his drinking habits;—while his patriotism, hard sense, and executive force were not qualities which the reformer appreciated. As it happened, Garrison was in Washington visiting his daughter, Mrs. Villard, on the anniversary of Washington's birthday, in 1866, when Johnson first violently denounced his congressional opponents in a public ad-

dress. To a man of Garrison's temper and antecedents, Johnson could be nothing but "the recreant President," while of the gratification of "secessionists and copperheads" over Johnson's speech he wrote: "I am sure the bottomless pit is equally jubilant."

Garrison early uttered a warning against the giving up of peace principles by the Abolitionists, which he believed would diminish the moral power of the abolition movement. Yet the congressional method of reconstruction, which he now advocated, involved the treatment of the Southern states as conquered, and the establishment in them, or in most of them, of negro rule by means of the military forces of the United States. It is incredible that without the experience of the war he himself, who had proclaimed that he had no weapons against the Southern slaveholders except the truth of God, who blamed Lovejoy and the free state settlers of Kansas and John Brown for taking up carnal weapons, should have sanctioned the control of the South by force of arms. The principles which led him to urge peaceful dismission of the Southern states before the war, it would seem, would have led him to believe that a naturally formed economic order alone could bring a stable government into existence in them afterward. So bitter were his feelings that he supported the impeachment of Johnson, declaring that the mere words in which he spoke of Congress were of themselves sufficient to justify his removal from office. He was grievously disappointed when the impeachment proceedings failed,

and never forgave the seven senators who sacrificed their political future to their sense of justice and right. Senator Fessenden of Maine, in particular, stood high on his black list.

Garrison later attacked Greeley's candidature for the Presidency against Grant, calling Greeley "the worst of all counselors, the most unsteady of all leaders, the most pliant of all compromisers in times of great public emergency." In effect, Garrison was so strong in his support of the Republican party after the war that a misguided member of the Massachusetts legislature wrote to him in 1874, during the senatorial deadlock after the death of Charles Sumner, and asked whether Garrison would accept the senatorship. The reply was of course a decisive rejection of the project.

In one respect Garrison's views were opposed to those of the Republican party of the time:—he was now a free trader, in the strictest sense and on the broadest principles. In 1869 he became a vice-president of the American Free Trade League and was active in the formation of a Revenue Reform League in Boston,—an organization in favor of a return to a specie standard of value, of the merit system in the civil service, and of a tariff for revenue only. Among the striking paragraphs in his speech on the occasion of the establishment of the Revenue Reform League, two are particularly noteworthy. Nowhere else is the faith of the political individualist as to governmental regulation of industrial conditions more dogmatically and clearly stated:

"The cause of human liberty covers and includes

all possible forms of human industry, and best determines how the productions thereof may be exchanged at home and abroad to mutual advantage. Though never handling a tool, nor manufacturing a bale of cotton or wool, nor selling a yard of cloth or a pound of sugar, he is the most sagacious political economist who contends for the highest justice, the most far-reaching equality, a close adherence to natural laws, and the removal of all those restrictions which foster national pride and selfishness. The mysteries of government are only the juggles of usurpers and demagogues. There is nothing intricate in freedom, free labor, free institutions, the law of interchange, the measure of reciprocity. It is the legerdemain of class legislation, disregarding the common interests of the people, that creates confusion, sophisticates the judgment, and dazzles to betray. The law of gravitation needs no legislative props or safeguards to make its operation more effective or more beneficent. . . .

"It is to be supposed—other things being equal—that those whose lives are devoted to business affairs and financial matters will have a clearer perception of what concerns their interests than those whose pursuits are simply professional or philanthropic. Other things being equal, I say—that is a very important qualification! Alas! they are often most unequal, because of a profligate disregard of principle; and then follow incongruity, entanglement, loss of vision, impaired judgment, desperate expedients, calamitous results. This was strikingly illustrated in the insane conduct of the

business men of the nation, of all classes, in burning incense and servilely bowing the knee to the Southern Moloch for a period of threescore years and ten, animated by the belief that it was a paying investment! What came of it, we have all had bitter occasion to know." [1]

Garrison declared "protection of American labor" to mean "restriction and taxation of that labor." He avowed himself "a radical free trader, even to the extent of desiring the abolition of all custom-houses, as now constituted, throughout the world."—"Is it not ludicrous to read what piteous calls are made for the protection of the strong against the weak, of the intelligent against the ignorant, of the well-fed against the half-starving, of our free republican nation against the effete governments of the Old World, in all that relates to the welfare of the people? . . . Must we guard our ports against the free importation of hemp, iron, broadcloth, silk, coal, etc., etc., as though it were a question of quarantine for the smallpox or the Asiatic cholera?" [2]

The same individualistic philosophy dictated Garrison's reply to appeals for aid in industrial reform. He saw many evils in the social constitution, but no radical wrong, like slavery, in the industrial régime. The "toiling masses," whom a correspondent summoned him to aid, were in his view but the American people, who could complain of nothing in the organization of society for which they were not themselves responsible, and which

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, pp. 262, 263. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 265.

their collective will could not easily correct. "You express the conviction that the present relation of capital to labor is 'hastening the nation to its ruin,' and that if some remedy is not applied, it is difficult to see 'how a bloody struggle is to be prevented.' I entertain no such fears. Our danger lies in sensual indulgence, in a licentious perversion of liberty, in the prevalence of intemperance, and in whatever tends to the demoralization of the people." [1]

There were no aspects of government and social order which interested him deeply unless he could view them as moral questions. Hence he gave his whole strength to opposing the military spirit prevalent after the war. He joined others who abhorred militarism in seeking to keep compulsory drill out of the Massachusetts public schools. His sons [2] tell how a young Japanese, who had been sent by his government to this country to prepare for the military profession, and who had been struck by Charles Sumner's address on "The True Grandeur of Nations," was so desirous of listening to Garrison's words on the subject that he was brought to Garrison's house by two young women, fellow students with the Japanese youth at Boston University. The young man went away convinced, returned to Japan, informed his government that he must renounce the career of a soldier, was imprisoned, and when released was placed in a petty position with scanty pay, but remained steadfast.

Garrison supported prohibition on principle, as

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 249. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

he had attacked slavery. A prohibitory law, passed in Massachusetts in 1852, was repealed in 1867, was reënacted in 1869, and was the football of politics for several years afterward until its repeal in 1875. In 1871 a local option law was passed in the state. Garrison's contention throughout was that the traffic in intoxicating liquors is so essentially sinful that the state has no right to sanction it by license or to attempt to regulate it as something merely liable to abuse, but if prohibition is impossible and ineffective, is bound simply to let it alone as an unclean thing. His vote for no-license at the local option election in 1871 was the only vote he had cast since that for Amasa Walker in 1834. At the same time he opposed the establishment of a Prohibition party. He believed that making a purely moral question a strictly party issue is likely to weaken the moral sentiment by adulterating it with the secondary considerations necessary to win votes; and as he did not see enthusiasm enough in the Republican and Democratic parties to make them effective antagonists of each other, he did not believe that anything would be gained by multiplying issues.

His views on woman suffrage were equally uncompromising. The suffrage was in his opinion a natural right, and by withholding it the states were guilty of taxation without representation. After the war he gave more energy to this question than to any other. The exposure of a winter journey to a suffrage convention in Vermont early in 1870 is believed by his sons to have been the cause of the

illness from which dates his continuous decline until his death nine years later.

Certain instances of the regulation of prostitution by law were attacked by him on the same ground as the legalizing of slavery and the licensing of the liquor traffic; namely, that the law has no right to give its sanction by regulation to that "from which flows more of evil than good," much less to that which is itself a sin. In 1871 he welcomed the agitation then begun in England by Mrs. Josephine E. Butler against the Contagious Diseases Acts, measures intended for the license and regulation of prostitution in garrison towns in Great Britain. In 1873 he supported Dr. W. G. Eliot in his assault on the licensing of prostitution in St. Louis. At intervals during the years of arduous struggle before either of these movements reached success, he wrote and spoke several times in favor of them.

Many other reforms engaged his attention. He supported Mr. Bergh and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and opposed corporal punishment in the public schools. He attacked American atrocities in the Indian wars. He urged the adoption of phonotypic printing as an aid in the teaching of reading. He sustained the contention of Roman Catholics that reading the Bible in the public schools was an infringement of religious freedom. He suggested that pulpit dulness would be overcome if the clergy would give up preaching from texts and devote their attention to the moral questions of their own day. In general he assailed the faults of his time rather than showed the better

way. He condemned international boat races, and by implication all athletic contests involving intense strain and expense, and magnifying athletic achievements out of proportion to intellectual ones. He reprobated the snobbishness of American tourists abroad. Many of his articles were corrections of what he regarded as "a fruitful source of public demoralization . . . the indiscriminate laudation bestowed after their removal by death upon men who have occupied high and responsible stations,"[1] without due regard to the moral qualities of their actions. To praise unworthy men was in his view to sin against youth. In this spirit he criticized Henry Wilson's *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power* for its indiscriminate commendation of reformers, especially of "sectarians." Bishop Hopkins of Vermont, that man of picturesque, many-sided cleverness,—composer, poet, historian, architect, essayist, lawyer, ecclesiastic, pedagogue, ritualist, and defender of slavery; George Peabody, the philanthropist, who spoke too favorably of the Southern whites and never showed sympathy for the Southern blacks; Millard Fillmore, the President who signed the Fugitive Slave Law and who after his death was eulogized by the legislature of Massachusetts, were in the company of those against whose posthumous glory he raised a protest. The same temper led him to oppose the appeal for subscriptions in aid of the college of which General Robert E. Lee became president. Garrison would not trust the "rebel leader" or

[1] *Independent*, April 23, 1874.

approve his white man's college. He attacked the John Quincy Adams of the day as degenerate from his great ancestor in connecting himself with the Democratic party and taking the stump in South Carolina. Everywhere Garrison strove to be an antidote to American complacency. In an article published in the number of the *Independent* following July 4th of the centennial year, when the air was full of rejoicing, when the country looked back in wonder over its progress and glory, he cited the shames of our history :—the slaveholding of those who founded the nation ; the continuance of the slaveholding spirit prompting white men of all regions and parties to deal iniquitously with the negroes ; the injustice of the war with Mexico, of the Indian policy, of refusing political rights to women. It is noteworthy that he says nothing of the disgraces of Grant's administration, just then become public.—"Before God, is this a time for special jubilation? If we rejoice at all, let it be with contrite hearts that we have not been utterly consumed." [1]

On the other hand, as Garrison advanced in years, he again and again uttered words of praise and farewell to those who like him had engaged in the struggle against slavery, and who had gone to the grave before him. He wrote for the press appreciations of such public men as Gerrit Smith, Henry Wilson, and Charles Sumner, in which he strove to characterize them with scrupulous accuracy, and to estimate their contribution to the

[1] *Independent*, July 6, 1876.

weal of mankind with exactness as judged from the loftiest moral standpoint, and yet to commend them with warmth for all the good they had wrought. At the funerals of many Abolitionists he spoke in the same spirit at once of strict justice and of heartfelt gratitude for their service as members of that small minority who by their virtue save the state against its will.

Among those at whose funeral Garrison spoke was Henry C. Wright, who died near Providence, Rhode Island, in August, 1870. He had no home, and upon Garrison and Wendell Phillips fell the responsibility of choosing a place of burial for him. A curious and very circumstantial narrative tells how a healing medium, whom Garrison consulted for his own illness, with no thoughts of Wright, was "controlled" by Wright's spirit, who told Garrison of a single triangular burial lot marked by a tree in a particular part of a certain cemetery near Providence, which would be satisfactory. The lot at first could not be found; another medium at Providence was made the vehicle of a communication insisting that it was in the cemetery, and at last, apparently by accident, the lot was discovered just where it had been revealed to be.[1]

So many funeral services was Garrison called on to perform that he may fairly be denominated, as his sons call him, "minister at large of the anti-slavery host." In spite of his anti-clericalism, there was in the nature of the man a certain type of ecclesiastic. His associates, his op-

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 253 *n*.

ponents, and his point of view during the most active part of his life were theological. He judged all things from *a priori* moral standards, and was led on inevitably into the consideration of cases of conscience, and of the bases of morals and faith. His emotions, though they flowed in deep and narrow channels, were stronger than his powers of analysis. He was an exhorter; and he had the sense of the dramatic and symbolic in conduct and speech which are essential parts of the successful clergyman's equipment. The pastoral office is so necessary to mankind, especially in giving fit forms to the public interest and sympathy at the crisis of death, that it is no wonder the "come-outers," who were all unchurched, should have turned to Garrison and Phillips as informal pastors. Thus it fell to Garrison to bid farewell to the devoted Quakeress, Sarah Grimké, who left her Southern home and suffered the painful experiences of the platform in the days when a woman who appeared on it was regarded with horror; to his gifted fellow lecturer, C. C. Burleigh; and to many more of the laborers in the anti-slavery cause.

His words beside their graves expressed implicit faith in a future reunion. He wrote to a friend: "Our old co-workers are fast disappearing from this earthly stage, and, in accordance with the laws of mortality, we must follow them at no distant day. How unspeakably pleasant it will be to greet them, and to be greeted by them, on the other side of the line! The longer I live, the longer I desire to live, and the more I see the desirableness of living;

yet certainly not in this frail body, but just as it shall please the dear Father of us all. 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.' What a blessed exchange, and how magnificent!" [1]

On January 28, 1876, Mrs. Garrison died from the effects of a sudden and severe attack of pneumonia. In Garrison's own enfeebled condition the strain of her illness and the shock of her death prostrated him so completely that he was not able to attend the funeral, and seemed likely to follow his wife to the grave in a few weeks. Though he was well enough to visit the Progressive Friends' meeting at Longwood, Pa., and the Centennial Exhibition in June, he was very infirm all the year. The winter was a trying one for him, and the loss, in May, 1877, of his daughter-in-law, Lucy McKim, the wife of his son Wendell Phillips Garrison and the daughter of his old friend and anti-slavery associate J. Miller McKim, shocked and weakened him. By the advice of his physician he went on a journey to England, where, though his condition forbade large formal assemblies in his honor, he was received with abundant and agreeable private hospitality. He spoke in public on a few occasions, the most important being the annual conference of the associations for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. In his address he congratulated the members of the associations that for

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, p. 252.

their souls' welfare they had taken hold of a righteous but undeservedly unpopular cause. "As for me, I think I should not know how to take part in a popular movement—it would seem so weakening, so enervating. Everybody is there, and there is nothing to be done excepting to shout." In England Garrison took his last farewell of his more than brother, George Thompson, now old, poor, and paralytic. The excitement of Garrison's visit restored to Thompson for a time his full power of articulate speech, which had been much impaired, and the two men, who had striven for humanity and were now near the grave, spent a time of sad happiness in each other's company. As the moment of parting came, the more afflicted sobbed on Garrison's shoulder, and then sat wistfully watching him disappear from his sight. The English journey brought Garrison a gleam of renewed energy and spirit, though no healing of his profound malady.

During the brief remainder of Garrison's life after his return, his mind was still engaged with public questions. The end of reconstruction had come; and when President Hayes announced his policy of withdrawing the United States troops from the support of the wretched pretenses of governments in the few states in which military forces were still retained, Garrison wrote with old-time intensity against the withdrawal. The idea of reëstablishing the tyranny of the rebel and the aforetime slaveholder over the unfortunate freedmen shocked him. No other question seemed to him worthy of being made a political issue, as he wrote

to Wendell Phillips, who had joined the Greenback-Labor party and was supporting General Benjamin F. Butler. "While the freedmen at the South are, on the 'Mississippi plan' and by the 'shotgun policy,' deprived of their rights as American citizens, and no protection is extended them by the Federal government, . . . the old anti-slavery issue is still before the country." Hence, as he expressly declared, the "'bloody shirt,'" an "awful symbol (yet but faintly expressive) of the gory tragedies that have been performed at the sacrifice of a hecatomb of loyal white and colored victims,"[1] must be used to rally the Republican party once more.

In the very last year of his life Garrison was moved to write a protest against the action of James G. Blaine in supporting the bill to restrict Chinese immigration. Garrison ardently defended the character of the Chinese from the aspersions cast upon it. But the main contention of his argument is that the United States ought to remain freely open to all immigration. He inveighed against the spirit of caste and the folly of Anglo-Saxon self-conceit. The majority of Chinese were worthy and valuable immigrants; and if some were not, it was our duty to raise them to our level.

To the end of his life, he kept up his interest in woman suffrage, and did all in his power with the same will as of old for every reform that seemed to him worthy. His last published utterances dealt

[1] *Life*, Vol. IV, pp. 293, 295.

with the exodus of some thousands of negroes from Louisiana and Mississippi in search of better conditions than at home. Garrison constituted himself treasurer of a relief fund for these unfortunate beings, and wrote a letter to the Boston *Traveler*, urging that the exodus was but the symptom of a grave disease, and that the millions of negroes still abiding in the states of the South should be reinstated and protected in their rights, political and industrial, by the power of the national government.

Yielding to the persuasions of his daughter, Mrs. Villard, who visited him in the spring of 1879, and saw how ill he was, he returned with her to New York to be cared for at her home. The disease, an affection of the kidneys, had gone too far for cure. On May 10th he took to his bed, from which he did not rise again. Two weeks later his children gathered about him and in his last hours of consciousness sang to him his favorite hymns,—"Amsterdam," "Christmas," "Lenox." Though he could not speak, he took part by beating the time with foot and hand. He died on May 24, 1879. Funeral services, at which Wendell Phillips made an impressive and affectionate address, were held in the church of the First Religious Society in Roxbury, and he was buried in Forest Hills Cemetery. His body lies in a fair spot in this beautiful resting-place of the dead, now a part of the city where he lived and labored. His grave, covered by a stone eloquent in its simplicity, is a place of pilgrimage, and his memory an inspiration.

CHAPTER XV

THE SUMMING UP—THE OUTCOME

William Lloyd Garrison peacefully closed his stirring career a little more than thirty years ago. Before he died he doubtless saw that the final issue of some things for which he had striven was not likely to prove satisfactory according to the standards he had set. Equal suffrage for men and women is the only cause that he advocated which will probably in the course of time have complete realization. It is pertinent in these closing pages to contrast the ideas he cherished with the results actually achieved.

If the foregoing chapters have hit the truth, the history of the rise and fall of slavery in this country is not with any completeness unfolded in a narrative of the greatest agitator against it. We may go a little further and say, not without hazard of criticism, that the story of Garrison is by no means the story of the anti-slavery movement,—even the filial biographers admit this by implication. The doings of this one remarkable man might, in fact, be almost lifted bodily from the annals of the general endeavor and then considered with reasonable fulness and adequacy. His is an exceptional instance of isolated though not unrelated performance, of which his own resolve to keep aloof from the en-

tangling alliances of every-day politics is the explanation. The course of the Garrisonians was parallel to, seldom convergent with the current down which the American people are accustomed to move toward an end. Their one-sidedness gave them an astonishing energy and enabled them to attain greater results than could have been looked for from more complacent and tolerant characters. They had not the impartial type of mind which can say with Tacitus, "*Mihi Galba, Otho, Vitellius nec beneficio, nec injuria cogniti.*"

But Garrison certainly builded better than he knew when he stopped the *Liberator* and resigned the presidency of the American Anti-Slavery Society. His own course was run when he was able to say, not irreverently, on April 15, 1865, over the grave of the mighty Calhoun: "Down unto a deeper grave than this slavery has gone, and for it there is no resurrection." He was an important instrument toward the achievement of an imperatively necessary result. It was his desire to have slavery abolished in a far different way, and he was sincere when he said, "I had no idea that I should live to see death and hell secede." He lived to see emancipation proclaimed, and three amendments, bearing on the results which must ensue from such emancipation, added to the Constitution which he had publicly burned a decade earlier; but he was not responsible for the partial failure of the country and the government to adjust themselves to conditions forced upon them by a destructive war, hateful in principle to Garrison as perhaps to no other,

and tolerable to him only because it seemed to him providentially imposed.

The negro at last was no longer a slave; racially he now became an Afro-American and by enactment a man. The old wrong and misery under protection of the state were over. Henceforth the freedman must work out his own salvation, with such aid as a generous government, better education, and gradually improving standards of life could afford him. Much and often as Garrison found reason to criticize the treatment of the negro from the end of the war to the hour of his death, he was not committed to the care-taking of this still unfortunate race. With a heart yet tender for their plight and their depressed position, his logical perception must have told him that the freedmen were somewhat in the same case as the so-called laboring classes on whom he seems to have spent so little sympathy. The working man and the lately enfranchised were under a domain of law that could and would protect them in their rights and privileges up to a certain point. Beyond that point they must tread unaided the path of opportunity, narrow or wide as it might be; not even William Lloyd Garrison, powerful to arraign the imperfections of a Constitution and a concrete national sin, could impose upon a reluctant country humanitarian theories of social toleration and of the universal brotherhood of man.

The negro to-day is a really neglected quantity as compared with our attitude toward him half a century ago. While many praiseworthy efforts are

directed toward his improvement, and while enlightened men in the South as well as in the North are devising plans to hearten him, he no longer, as a race, absorbs our interest or our attention. Uncle Tom has become merely Sambo, doomed apparently to the humbler occupations and not welcomed in or encouraged to rise to high planes of life. He has been freed at a fabulous price; he is a citizen under the law; now let him, if he can, take the hard chances of life like the rest of us—such is the general attitude toward a melancholy but not necessarily hopeless situation.

One influence exerted by Garrison has lasted to the present day, although it is equally possible to overestimate or underestimate this influence which indirectly affected those who may never have heard his name. He preached no new thing, for all that he said was good Scripture long before he appeared; but, aided by other radicals, as religious in conduct as they were infidel in creed, he dealt a really terrible blow to ecclesiasticism in this country. The point is not whether the churches themselves were a "brotherhood of thieves" as Stephen Foster called them, or the "bulwarks of American slavery" as Birney said they were, but whether they were to be dominated by a reactionary clergy and its supporters. In this matter Garrison had a potent influence, but no such influence is ever capable of precise analysis. It is not enough to say that the trend of American religious life has followed the lines marked out by Garrison;—that the Sabbath is now regarded in this country with less rev-

erence than in his day, and is observed more for its value than for its sanctity; that the revelation of the Divine is looked for within the Bible, and that the Bible as a whole is not regarded as a mechanically perfect revelation; that the ministry in most evangelical churches is not a sacrosanct body; that the Church concerns itself with questions of the day; that more stress is laid on the Christian's duty to his neighbor than on his duty to God. Before any important part in this general movement can be ascribed to Garrison, evidence must be given that he was in some sense a leader and not merely the servant of an influence so powerful as to carry him along with the trend of the age.

If any leadership was exercised by Garrison, it was a moral and not an intellectual leadership. Garrison originated no new ideas in any field, but proclaimed ideas suggested to him by others with an energy and a tenacity; in other words, with a power of will, that compelled attention. Thus, though Garrison received the suggestion of immediate emancipation from the Rev. George Bourne (1816), the Rev. James Duncan (1824), and perhaps Elizabeth Heyrick, the English Quakeress (1825), yet his declaration of the doctrine made an epoch in the history of the anti-slavery movement, because it became the rallying-point for a body of supporters, and because it was the platform of a campaign. Likewise the Rev. James Boyle, J. H. Noyes, and H. C. Wright preached their own heresies with less force than Garrison, though he was in theological matters but their pupil. It was the Garrisonian

Abolitionists who first, decidedly, powerfully, and with the force of organized numbers assailed sabbatarianism, ecclesiasticism, belief in the plenary inspiration of the Bible, and indifference to social abuses in the church of their day; and Garrison as their head was the recognized leader of this as of the extreme abolition movement itself. The orthodox press chose the Abolitionists as the chief representatives of contemporary apostasy, and named Garrison the "Prince of New England Infidelity."

Further, the influence of the Abolitionists upon the Transcendentalists must be recognized. The ideas of Garrisonianism, expanded and etherealized, may be traced in the assertions of individualism of spirit and socialism of duty in the pages of the Transcendentalists. No doubt it is too much to say with Mr. John J. Chapman that Garrison made Emerson possible; yet even this exaggeration is useful in correcting the tendency to attribute overmuch to a German origin the spirit of Transcendentalism in America. However much the form of Transcendentalism may have been affected by a congenial German philosophical terminology, its sources and spirit are American. Its roots are in American life, in the manifold efforts to break through convention in American society, efforts which in their last analysis were but one aspect of the American consciousness that the United States was a vast laboratory of social experiment, a "New World" of the spirit as well as of the geographical atlas, in which a chosen people were to establish "Time's noblest empire." Garrison's speaking out

was the most prominent New England expression of the ferment which was most active in little circles of radicals and reformers in regions farther west. Now the mark of Transcendentalism upon our American religious life is broad and deep; its influence directly upon various denominations, even upon Roman Catholics, is to be perceived in the anti-dogmatism, the individualism, and the social morality of the church of our day. On the whole, then, that Garrison's influence was but one among many forces must be conceded; that in some sort the American religious world would in time have moved in the direction which it has taken is, perhaps, undeniable. All that can fairly be said is that the change took the form it did take, and came when it did come, in no small part because of Garrison's mind and will.

If the "gods delight in gods" as Emerson says they do, then, for ordinary mortals, it requires more than a touch of radicalism in one's nature, a revolt at the usual order of things, and perhaps somewhat of the divine fire, to appreciate the Garrisons of any age. Even Mr. F. B. Sanborn, still as vigorous and unflinching to attack all forms of evil as he was sixty years ago, says of the Emancipator, whom he did not meet until 1852, that "his methods were illogical in the extreme," though he found him "lovable and gentle" when not in a vituperative mood. "His private life was in absolute contrast with his public career." In spite of these qualifications, Mr. Sanborn thinks that Garrison did hold the question of slavery "con-

stantly before the public by his persistency." Another radical, but yet a milder one, believed that "the purity of Garrison's character, the lovable sweetness of his spirit, and his unsparing devotion to the welfare of others, made it impossible for the most orthodox of his friends to turn him over to Satan, though they were obliged to call him 'infidel.'"

Mr. Archibald H. Grimké, one of the biographers of Garrison, and of the race which owes so much to his memory, thought his subject "strangely deficient in a sense of proportion." The lack is well illustrated by Garrison's strongly expressed sentiments in regard to the anti-Chinese attitude of the country just before his death. He pronounced, with his lifelong vehemence, this attitude to be "narrow, conceited, selfish, anti-human, anti-Christian." With the sort of political economy or political science that works out its conclusions by means of the calculus, he had no sympathy, and we may fairly say that he had no comprehension of its method or import. Not the action of economic laws or the pressure of the ethnic struggle, but the application of larger and it must be said vaguer principles of universal justice, of absolute ethics, of the unity of the human race, had a real significance to him. For "that general middlingness," —George Eliot's phrase—which accepts things as they are and tries to make the best of them, he had no sympathy. In fact he came rather close to Nietzsche's "Nie pozwalam—I refuse to assent."

It would be unjust to an estimate of Garrison's

reputation as a public man not to reckon in the opinions of those who knew him on the intimate and personal side, and who honored the "purity of his life and the generous beauty of his character" —to use the words of Richard Webb. But the brief tributes of two friends of widely differing type must suffice, for they express well enough the opinions of those who came to understand and venerate his personality as it was revealed to them. The adverse opinions have been fairly disclosed in the course of the present work. After summering and wintering him for many years, Samuel May, Jr., himself a bringer to the cause of the rich gifts of "integrity, humanity, and culture—inherited and personal," was able to say: "He possesses one of the most gentle, affectionate, kindly natures I ever met with. He never tires of meeting and relieving, with words and deed, the oft-recurring cases of suffering and perplexity. That which would disturb and ruffle another, he meets with calmness and patience; and it is a fact, that as one and another become personally acquainted with him, they never fail to express their surprise that he is so unlike what he has been represented to be, and what indeed, from an occasional perusal of his writings (coupled with preconceived ideas), they had supposed him to be."

In more accentuated strain, George Thompson, more aggressive, less gentle in word and manner than May, speaks, after a test of twenty years, of his friend Garrison as "a man who, though denounced by the state as a traitor, reviled by the

Church as a heretic, and anathematized by the slaveholding conspiracy of America as an incendiary, is the truest patriot, one of the most devout imitators of the life of Christ, and one of the best friends of the human race. If I were asked to name the man of the present age, who has accomplished the greatest moral work of the age, and from whose labors the mightiest issues would flow, I should unhesitatingly pronounce the name of William Lloyd Garrison."

Within two inches of six feet tall, dressed with scrupulous neatness, the happy possessor of good teeth, and a clear complexion surmounted by a fine forehead, Garrison was a personable man to the day of his death. He was unmistakable and did not look like any one of a thousand others. He must have had a fair measure of good health, in spite of numerous ailments, and an uncommon measure of strength and energy, else he could not have endured the various and prolonged strains put upon him. Possibly he hoarded his resources by his habit of procrastination : what is put off until to-morrow is often never done, and no one the worse for the delay.

He was a modern in his love of outdoors and took pleasure in some of the less strenuous sports. He was equal to a game of whist and not above playing croquet. His life in his home was ideally beautiful, for he was a lover to his wife and a just, considerate and open-hearted friend and companion to his children. The tax put upon his hospitable and companionable nature was severe to one of

most restricted means, but it was borne by himself and his household with buoyant cheerfulness. His was no double nature, yet it is easy to think that there were two Garrisons: one radiant with kindliness and good-nature among his friends and in his family; the other terrible and forbidding when he arraigned with equal invective Church and State, slaveholder and pewholder, merchant prince and miserable catcher of fugitive blacks for their apostasy toward the laws of God and the principles which should govern man.

Of his use of the English language it seems to be conceded that it was plain, vigorous and impressive. He employed a phraseology based upon a close knowledge of the Scriptures; the denunciation of the prophets of woe was perhaps oftener on his lips than were the consoling promises of the new dispensation. He was not eloquent as Phillips was, nor an orator, elegant and learned, after the pattern of such contemporaries as Charles Sumner, Edward Everett and Robert C. Winthrop. He certainly had not the dynamic, irresistible eloquence of a Webster. He was sober, though not without many expressions of humor, and his presentation of argument required close attention. To the careless or the young he was probably hard to follow with complete absorption. But his earnestness did for the cause he pleaded what perhaps a tongue of fire could not—it made his hearers believe first in him, and then by natural sequence in his reasonings.

He wrote poetry, especially sonnets, of far more

than an ordinary merit. To one child certainly, the late W. P. Garrison, this gift descended in a choice way. In 1843 Garrison published a small volume entitled *Sonnets and Other Poems.* Not only did his verses in the making prove a consolation to him, often during hours of anxiety and trouble, but they unquestionably were an inspiration to his cause. Usually correct in form and exalted in feeling, they still have interest. Now and then he would fall below his own standard, as when he put forth the rather afflictive verses beginning,

> "I am an Abolitionist,
> I glory in the name."

But even such productions had their uses for the era in which they were written.

Measured by the highest standards of life, many of the ethical activities of the present day are of secondary value, since they address themselves to material improvements rather than to a release from thraldom in spiritual affairs. To Garrison's mind the struggle to free the slave immediately and without parley was, more than anything else, a religious combat in which all the energies of the soul might have play. As a humanitarian he could but smile approvingly on most of the various efforts of this day to better the lives of men, women and children. But he could not, nor may we, regard as of the highest importance the earnest, often frenzied zeal for all the well-meant expressions of humanity's determination not to wax fat and let its moral tissues degenerate. There are already signs in the heavens

that mere prosperity, however vast, is not enough. Great wealth and great power having come to us by virtue of our ability and force, the question is facing us squarely, what to do with them, and how to control them within prudent bounds. To modify the working conditions of what has happily been called our controllable environment, without disturbing the constitutional and judicial adjustment of national life—these are problems which seem to offer to a great people an undertaking worthy of its best endeavor. For such a cause there must be and perhaps already are leaders capable of carrying so grave a struggle to a successful issue. In such a contest between a people and an internal evil menacing its existence, there must be statesmen, great jurists capable of discerning the pitfalls prepared for hastily contrived laws. But there will be a place for such as Garrison, uncomplex, never deviating, never tempted by the allurements of ambition, to inspire and warn. When the issue is made plain and the people begin to look for a sign—there need be little fear but that out of the crucible, molten with the fierce combustion of political and social ideals, will come forth a clear spiritual product; others as fearless and single-hearted as Garrison and his little cohort will appear. In 1865 Garrison said: "To-day, it is popular to be president of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Hence, my connection with it terminates here and now, both as a member and as its presiding officer." And that must be the spirit of all who wage impersonal war with spiritual and not lethal weapons. It may

be doubted, however, whether just such an opportunity as his will ever present itself again in this country. In his day there was homogeneity; appeal might be made to fellow citizens who could interpret his arguments in his own language, even when they could not agree with them. He spoke to his own flesh and blood and was not obliged to be over-conciliatory to differences of race and religion. To-day an extremist would find it hard not to offend beyond forgiveness if he assailed men and measures in Garrison's way. The older freedom has largely gone. Perhaps it is just as well, yet a certain effectiveness has been lost when a fighter for ideals must consider overmuch whether he is wounding racial or religious sensibilities.

A foremost characteristic of Garrison's make-up was a well-seasoned hopefulness. The clouds hung heavy over his cause for twenty years before the war broke out, and were dark enough to chasten even his intrepid soul. He saw compromise and policy continuously triumphing; his own immediate organization dismembered by faction—only his little handful of followers really left to him at times; but, at heart, he really never was discouraged, certainly never to the surrender-point of effort. Much that he strove for has since his death seemed to come to naught. His own peculiar courage is needed to-day among those who cherish similar ideals of American life and the possibilities contained therein. How strongly the hopefulness and manly strength of the great Abolitionist is demanded was well expressed by his youngest son on

the occasion of the celebration, in 1905, by the colored citizens of Boston of the one hundredth anniversary of Garrison's birth. It epitomizes, as follows, the aspirations and the misgivings, but never the despair of American political idealism :

"When my father passed away, the reactionary movement against the exercise of the elective franchise by the Southern freedmen had already set in, and his last published utterance was a protest against the proscription which had driven hundreds of them from Mississippi and Louisiana to Kansas. Since then the fraudulent tissue ballots have been succeeded by no less fraudulent enactments which have practically disfranchised the colored population of the South, and if he were to return to-day he would find not only the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution nullified, but the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, defied by the wretches who attempted a system of peonage. He would find negroes excluded from juries, from all town, city and state governing bodies, denied legal intermarriage with whites, restricted to negro galleries in the theatres and negro cars on the trains, subjected to excessive penalties for violations of law, and in many ways still victims of that cruel and unrelenting race prejudice which he assailed from the outset of his warfare seventy-five years ago. He would find women denied their full political rights in all but four states of the Union, and the Chinese, whose claim to equal treatment with all other immigrants to our shores he vindicated with his latest breath, still excluded as outcasts.

He would view with amazement the spectacle of the United States seizing distant islands, slaughtering their people by tens of thousands, and establishing colonial government 'without the consent of the governed.' He would be saddened by the mad increase of naval armaments, and the increasing disposition to interfere in, and arbitrarily regulate, the affairs of feebler countries. He would deplore the lowering of civic ideals, the growth of the commercial spirit, which have resulted in the widespread business and political corruption now being uncovered in our country. But would he be disheartened or hopeless as to the future? Assuredly not!"

Of him, then, fearless to wage unending war against concrete evil, yet spurning the coarse weapons of physical offense and defense, one may say with Emerson that he

"Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust."

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